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REGINALD HASTINGS;

OR,

A TALE OF THE TROUBLES

IN 164—.

BY ELIOT WARBURTON, ESQ.,

AUTHOR OF "THE CONQUEST OF CANADA," "HOCHELAGA," "THE CRESCENT AND THE CROSS," &c., &c.

'Fight on, thou brave true heart, and falter not, through dark fortune and through bright. The cause thou fightest for, so far as it is true—no farther, yet precisely so far—is very sure of victory; the falsehood of it alone will be abolished, as it ought to be.'

NEW YORK:

HARPER & BROTHERS, PUBLISHERS,

82 CLIFF STREET.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE last few years have been very fruitful in the discovery of old Manuscripts, especially of such as are calculated to throw new light and interest on the important period of our Civil War. It has lately been my fortune to pass much time in the examination of this unprinted literature, and I feel a great interest, perhaps a prejudice, in favor of such unstudied compositions. The frank and manly, yet tender spirit that many of them breathe, the genuine feeling that they reveal, and the stirring incidents that they so naturally relate, attracted me. I was tempted, before laying them aside for graver studies, to endeavor to imitate them, or rather to present their meaning and information in a collective and continuous form. How little justice I have rendered to their merit or to my own design, the sternest critic cannot point out more plainly than I myself am ready to admit. I still venture to hope, however, that I have left enough of their genuine spirit unimpaired, to afford some interest.

Without attempting to confound the Author and the Editor, I can honestly affirm that the latter has not put into the mouth of the former a single sentiment, and scarcely an adventure, that may not be found in the Manuscripts relating to the great Civil War. The Autobiographer (of whom I must henceforth speak in the second person), has spoken for himself truly, if not otherwise commendably.

One fault (or merit, as the case may be) of an Autobiography, is that it necessarily leaves its chief moral deductions to the Reader: the Biographer may make his personages a text for inculcating high and pure and noble principles, whether by the example or the warning of his hero: the Autobiographer can, from the nature of his case, only furnish forth his own adventures and experience, for such deductions as the wisdom or the ingenuity of the Reader may distill from them. The same argument of course applies to fictitious autobiography. In both cases, the utility and success of the work must depend mainly on the Reader, as the prosperity of a jest in the ear of the hearer.

To return to my Cavalier. His Memoirs, or Confessions as they should perhaps be called, appear to have been composed with a twofold object; namely, in the hope of illustrating the social life of the period of which he

treats, and of rendering more familiar its leading characters; not only such heroic characters as inspire emulation, but also such as may deter from future evil, by showing of what base matter that evil was composed. Nevertheless the Cavalier's narrative in the main is simply the story of his own life, such as it was then, such as it might be now; and if it possess no moral, we can only say that he lived in vain. I do not fear that the antiquity of his experience will prove prejudicial to his interest; for the passions—as immortal as the spirit of which they are the features—are unchangeable by time and almost by circumstances; nay, if anything, the religion and the chivalry, and the love and hatred of other days affect us more, as they stand out in bolder relief from the familiar circumstances of our own.

It is unnecessary to observe that the Autobiographer writes under a feigned name; in the reign of Charles II., in which his tale concludes, it was by no means satisfactory to look back upon any public career in the preceding reign. Those, however, who are acquainted with the characters of the Wentworth, the Godolphin, and the Sunderland of that time, will easily find parallels for the characters and adventures of Reginald and Hugo Hastings. They will not be surprised to find Cavaliers sometimes conversing without oaths, and Puritans (as I hope) applying texts without profanity: the absence of such accustomed seasoning may tell against “dramatic relish,” but will not be universally condemned.

To apologize for other and greater faults would be endless and importunate; I prefer to trust my Cavalier and his Confessions, undefended, to the Reader's generous indulgence.

MARCH 20, 1850.

REGINALD HASTINGS.

CHAPTER I.

These walls do not a prisoner make,
Nor iron bars a cage;
Minds innocent and quiet take
This for a hermitage.

LOVELACE.

I AM a prisoner, closely guarded and confined, suddenly secluded from the most stirring strife that ever kindled in the heart of a great people. Three days ago I was free, and fighting with all the energy of mingled hope and desperation; now faint in frame and spirit, I am hidden away in a dungeon's obscurity, condemned perhaps for years to silent and helpless inactivity.

For the first few days of my captivity I scarcely found it irksome; the scenes of thrilling and ceaseless interest I had so long lived in seemed to be reënacted in imagination; I chewed the cud of a glutted memory, and was unconscious of any void in its supply. At length returning hunger of action seized me, my wounds had ceased to torture, my blood had supplied its loss, and bounded in my veins once more. I sprang from my pallet and gazed eagerly upon the rising sun: he soon passed beyond the narrow rift of daylight visible between my barred windows and the battlements: that little glimpse of the infinite sky only served to render my confinement more dismal, from its contrast with my tomb-like cell.

The first sense of imprisonment is appalling, and scarcely to be imagined by those to whom freedom seems as natural as life itself. The mass of iron and stone that surrounds you strikes cold upon the eye; the solemn silence of the crowded but sternly-guarded prison oppresses the ear, and a sense of utter helplessness weighs down the heart. * * *

The first day of restored consciousness appeared to me to contain an age of suffering and painful thought. I vainly strove to fix my attention on some actual object; my eyes soon lost sight of it, and strayed away to gaze on those imaginary scenes that recalled my uselessness—my misery of inaction. The thought of escape naturally seized me, but it was only for a moment; the little cell in which I was confined had set all the inspirations of courage and despair at defiance for six centuries. It had been a dungeon since the time of the Conqueror, and was about eighteen feet square; the walls composed of huge stones, cemented by tough old mortar that was harder still. The only window consisted of four dim panes, deeply set in a massive wall, with iron bars, whose deep, dark rust proved their long service and trustworthiness; this window opened upon a narrow battlemented terrace, patrolled by a sentinel, whose shadow alone was perceptible as it approached and retired, ghost-like,—his bodily presence, enemy as he was, would have been a relief to me.

Gradually my very soul seemed to share in the sorrowfulness of my cell, and to shrink within its

limits: my senses, concentrated on such few objects, became more observant of those few, which dilated in the same proportion. I gradually detected faint sounds and sights in the apparent blank and silence that surrounded me; I could hear the rustle of the sentry's weather-beaten doublet, and the trail of his pike along the leads of the castle. Once or twice, too, I thought I heard something stirring under the stony floor, but that must be imagination. I approach the window to catch a breath of fresh air through a broken pane, and I perceive some scratches on the glass that appear to me like letters. They have been cut with a keen diamond, but if they have any meaning it is undecipherable, and yet—

I had written thus far when the gaoler entered with my dinner, and at once changed the current of my thoughts. Nothing breaks into the reveries of a young fasting man like the smell of food; and it was not only the savory fumes of a venison steak, but the presence of a fellow-creature, that turned my thoughts into a more cheerful channel. The turnkey was a short, stout, bow-legged varlet, with broad stooping shoulders, and a neck that might puzzle the hangman to discover, through the tangles of his lank red hair and grizzly beard. A certain stamp of men seems to be produced, by nature to fill certain situations, and this man had evidently found his destined place; his small malevolent eyes appeared just adapted to scrutinize a dungeon, and to examine fetters; his mouth was full of bitterness, and there was room for a good deal of it within his huge jaws and wolfish teeth; a grayish sandy beard bristled on his pointed chin, and reached half way up his face. Yet was his presence heartily welcome to me, independently of his savory mission; he was the only fellow-creature I was destined to see for many a day, and I would have liked him if I could.

He laid a coarse white napkin on the window recess, and I observed him adding the different accessories of my meal with interest, but in silence. At length, he reluctantly crowned his labors by placing a flask of wine near the pewter dish, and then expressed by an impatient gesture, that he was waiting to remove the remnants of my dinner.

"You've wine from the governor's own cellar to-day," said he, as I proceeded to act upon his implied suggestion; "it's good Rhenish, and fitter for honest men than for the like of ye, rantipoling Cavaliers, limbs of Satan, as ye are. It's little of such comfort I thought thou'dst be wanting in this world, when thou wast brought in here, stiff and bloody, some days syne; I thought our musketeers had been saved a job."

I was too well pleased to hear the sound of the human voice to be critical as to its purport, and I applied myself to my flask and platter with a soldier's appetite, while my attendant continued in almost articulate growls to vent his spleen.

"Ay, swill away! Never have we a swaggering and half starved Cavalier, but has the thirst of Dives, as if he was already in a place of torment."

"Here, my friend," said I, "you seem to want a drop to cool your own tongue, and when you've done so, please to tell me for what, or to whom, I am indebted for this good fare."

The turnkey emptied the horn of wine without ceremony, and replied that it was by the Governor's orders that I was so indulged; "but," added he, "doant thou be set up for that matter; for the man Aubrey that lay in that bed before you was cockered up in the same manner, and four days ago he was led out and shot like a dog—yea, with the good liquor yet in his mouth, and wasted. But I've no business to be here talking to a wine-bibbing son of Belial, as thou art. There be pens and ink, and paper, and candles, and profane books, and I must e'en wait on thee before sunset with more meat, and receive thy orders."

So saying, he collected his cups and platters and departed, leaving me with a plentiful supply of the important matters he had named. Provided with these great and responsible instruments, my mind became more restless than ever; small physical privations occupy the attention far more than we care to admit into rivalry with sentimental sorrow, and when I found myself with a well-satisfied appetite, I felt more than ever the necessity of some occupation to divert sad thoughts. There lay the best implements for solitary labor, if I could use them aright—pen and paper—yea, the very means of immortality! I thought of the great and gallant Raleigh, of Galileo, of Tasso, of our own Lovelace, and felt how glorious a matter imprisonment *might* be made.

"But not for me," I mournfully thought, as I paced up and down my narrow cell; "science, philosophy, or poetry, may well glorify the bondage of those whom they inspire; but from a rough, idle soldier like myself, whose head and heart are full of all that he has undergone—that he is still undergoing—what material can be obtained to enlighten, or even amuse the world?"

"Nevertheless," I resumed, (still keeping my eyes fixed on the momentous pen, which at length I grasped more nervously than when I first drew my maiden sword for war), "what I have undergone, thousands of my countrymen have, at least in part, experienced; and thousands to come will wish to know what an Englishman has felt and done in times like these; what errors he has fallen into, and by what actions he has endeavored to redeem those errors.

Again, a doubt came over me, and I laid down that tempting pen. To whom am I about to unveil the secrets of my heart—the secrets of my friends?

Who will be the readers and the critics of what I am about to record?

Will even those who have known me find interest in the reawakened memories of scenes that we have shared? Will those, to whom the writer is but a name, bestow their sympathies upon my joys and sorrows, for the sake of joys and sorrows of their own which my narration may recall?

It may be that the former are grown too old, or cold, or changed, and that the latter will be too little touched by the strangeness of my story to lend to it a willing ear. Nevertheless, I long to unburden my memory of its load as the sick in

soul to a confessor, or the ill in health to a physician. Written by my own hand, my biography shall relate only to the dead; before any stranger shall read these lines, their author will be unconscious of the blessing of his sympathy, or the insult of his sneer. For this reason, I can,—yea, and will write to the world as freely, as fully, and as truly, as if I were pouring my confessions in the friendliest ear.

With these thoughts, I once more grasped my pen, and vehemently and hastily wrote down the above—the first words that presented themselves; fearing, if I paused to reconsider them, that such a commencement would shame me from continuance. As a young bird prepares for flight, I flattered through these sentences, and then determined to trust myself for good or ill upon a longer flight; yea, even if my gray goose-quill should prove but an Icarian wing.

Here, then, is the history of my young life as far as it has gone; it may prove to be but a fragment and a brief one.

I am the eldest son of Reginald, Lord Hastings of Beaumanoir. His ancestors had shared in the dangers and rewards of the Norman Conquest, and for centuries since, had rendered good and knightly service for the lands bestowed by the Conqueror. If, at any time, their title deeds had failed, the loss might have been supplied from their country's history, with which their names were interwoven. In the wars of Ireland, of the Holy Land, of France, and of the Roses, their blood had been profusely shed, and the present unhappy times found my father still ready to stand or fall by the banner of his King. Yet his was no blind, unreasoning obedience, that abandoned the right of private judgment. In his youth he had been persecuted by King James for espousing the cause of Raleigh; in his age he had fallen under the displeasure of King Charles for a quarrel with Buckingham, and resistance to that Duke's successors in the ministry. It was only the danger of the Crown that brought him to its assistance, and reawakened, as it were, a grateful memory, that he and his fathers owed to it their cherished home and their broad lands. In his chivalrous code of honor, the lapse of time had not weakened the obligation; he still enjoyed the reward of his ancestors' loyalty, and he conceived that he still owed feudal and loyal gratitude for that possession.

This fidelity of my father's to the King was imitated by that of our tenants to himself. They had, for the most part, descended from the tenants of our forefathers, through lines as ancient as their own. Though leases were unknown to our rent-rolls, the same names were to be found in each farm-house through successive centuries; our people had changed from Saxon serfs to British yeomen, without ever having changed their fealty to our house. In the village, indeed, it was whispered, that the newly-popular principles had gained some ground, but many of the inhabitants there were strangers; trade and its votaries being far more liable to change and innovation than agriculture, to which they are for the most part opposed in principle if not in interest. This village stood upon the sea-shore, about half-a-mile from The Manor, as our old house was familiarly called. Our park gates opened on a large bowling-green which stood in the very heart of the little town. A tall May-pole occupied its center, surrounded by some forty or fifty

houses and cottages, each with its gaily-painted sign-board, or little garden and trellised arbor, if it appropriated to no public calling.

For the manor itself, it was a house of great extent and very varied architecture. Originally a hunting-lodge of Earl Godwins, it stood on a gentle eminence in an extensive chase, or forest, well opened into glades and meadows. The Saxon palace had been fortified with Norman towers, and surrounded by a graff, or moat, in the reign of Rufus. A royal visit from Queen Elizabeth had superinduced the addition of a banquetting-hall with other apartments; and my grandfather, in the reign of King James, had yet further added to the confusion of all architectural rule, by an endeavor to blend the various discrepancies of his house into one uniform style.

The pride of this quaint but venerable mansion was the entrance hall, some eighty feet in length, and in height, up to the cedar rafters, perhaps half as much. The carved oak with which it was paneled was invisible to my young eyes, though I might have seen it naked enough afterward: in the days of peace it was covered over with armor, and weapons of every age, from that of Alfred downward. Its arrangement was very perfect as to time; for each helmet, morion, hauberk, or haquetin, hung upon the spot where its last wearer had placed it. This armory was my father's pride; my brother and I learnt the history of our country, and of our ancestors, from the battered shields of Hastings, Acre, Flodden-Field, Cressy, Poitiers, and Agincourt, as from so many medals.—Alas! for the day that scattered those trophies widely over England! Alas! for the gallant yeomen friends, who left that harness only with their lives, on Edgehill, Newbury, and Chalgrove Field!

At the upper end of the old hall was a dais, on which a table stood crosswise under a huge painted window, which I fear had been sacrilegiously obtained in Bluff King Harry's time. Well I remember the awe with which I used to look upon my father, as he sat enthroned at that table on the King's birthday, with his neighbors assembled round him, and his farmers seated at the long tables that ran from end to end of the great hall. Opposite the doorway yawned a huge fire-place, over-arched by a high mantel-piece, elaborately carved and surmounted by a gallery, in which my mother and her fair guests used to appear on occasions of high solemnity, when the hall below was filled with retainers that would have died to serve her.

The rest of the old house within was like most others of its kind: a labyrinth of galleries and staircases, and almost forgotten rooms, with which none but the oldest servants professed acquaintance. Without, behind the house, was a large court-yard, with stables for a troop of horse, and a smithy, still called the armorer's forge. There, also, were barns and granaries, and all the appurtenances of a country-house, that boasted to want nothing beyond its own power to supply. There were gardens too, and fishponds surmounted by a heronry, and all the various excrescences supposed necessary or comfortable, that gather round old family places, where each son preserves, with pious and hereditary care, the things that his dead father cared for.

There is a veneration and mystery attached

to old ancestral houses such as these, that powerfully impresses the imagination. The various human experiences that those gray walls have sheltered; the bright faces that have looked out through those narrow windows; the grim sentries that have patrolled those battlemented towers; the voices of joy and mourning, of anger, of comfort, of desolation, of despair, that have sounded through those halls; the bridal trains and funeral processions that have passed through those wide doors; the startling news, now almost forgotten in history, that was told round those large fire-places; the venerable forms that have reposed in that old arm-chair—the merry children that have been hushed to sleep in that old-fashioned cradle; all, within and without, may now be wholly changed, yet each has left its character impressed upon the ancient home of an ancient race.

All this is altered now, they tell me. It is many a day since I have seen my birth-place; besieging artillery and ruthless pillage since then have done their utmost to obliterate all marks of what that home was once. I am thankful that I have been spared that sight, and that I can still picture to myself the old manor in all its hospitable pride, when passers-by would exclaim as they pointed to it: "There lives an English gentleman of the good old time!"

Such, indeed, was my father. He stood among the first of that almost unnoticed class of country gentlemen, who form the principal strength and real power of the state. I mean unnoticed in public life only, for in the wide circle of his own neighborhood, he possessed an honored name and moral influence that kings might envy. To him, as a common center, converged all the petitions, applications, and appeals of the surrounding country; to his justice, his counsel, or his generosity, the wronged, the embarrassed, and the poor with confidence appealed; and by his opinions, ever frankly and fearlessly expressed, the public opinion of his neighborhood was influenced, if not wholly formed.

He possessed not only the confidence, but the love of all his neighbors. There was something genial and generous in his manner that seemed infectious,—the cold and cautious warmed beneath its influence, the timid were encouraged, and the poor felt the presence of a friend. Though he had been in his time a courtier, a soldier, and a traveler, yet my father was passionately fond of the country,—its labors, its sports, and all the various interests that it yields to those who cultivate them. He had married the daughter of a noble courtier, but her tastes had become so merged in his, that neither of them ever sent a thought in search of pleasure or amusement beyond the limits of their happy home.

I must not, in speaking of that home, pass on without a tribute to the character of my mother, who rendered it a cherished sanctuary. She was of so excellent a nature that I have always respected WOMAN for her sake, whatever my after-experience of *women* may have been. For her sake, I have always met with scorn the fashionable sneers against married life, and been able to believe that it was in mercy God gave the first man a wife, notwithstanding the result. Yes, blessed be she—whether of Eden, or of this poor penal earth—who fulfills her mission to her husband! who soothes his sorrows, extenuates his

failings, brightens his bright hours, and irradiates his darkness! No jealous vanity, no morbid pride ever stains the pure motives of her ministry;—her noble and self-sacrificing thought and thoughtfulness is ever of him whom God hath given her—of what will wound, of what will soothe, of what will comfort him—the father of her children, the sharer of her destiny.

Happy, thrice happy, through all his mortal misery is he who can fold such a woman to his grateful heart. Her gentleness subdues, her meekness softens him; her patient endurance conquers more than the stormiest eloquence; her presence can enable her husband to cherish life, and yet to smile upon the death that spares him the anguish of outliving her. So thought my father, justly; but his wife was not destined to survive him. She had long been delicate, though her illness wore that beautiful and delusive beauty, that so often in our climate only decks the victim for the tomb. But her spirits rose with her decay, and she was happy—happy in her stainless conscience, happy in all around her, and most of all, happy in her merry little child of some two years old, who was her almost constant companion.

If I thus linger on my native threshold, I may be excused, for my after-life presents far different events. From the recollection of these last, I often seek refuge in childish memories; they are always welcome. I am still happy in that home I have described, though for me it now exists only in imagination.

CHAPTER II.

Sweet in manner, fair in favor,
Mild in temper, fierce in fight,
Warrior nobler, gentler, braver;
Never shall behold the light.

ANON.

My second brother, Hugo, was scarcely seven-teen when my story commences. In spite of all their efforts to conceal it, he was the favorite of both our parents. I never grudged—I scarcely envied him that priceless distinction. Nor could I wonder at it; he was so gentle and so generous, so brave, and good, and true. I was too proud of his genius and acquirements to feel jealous of the comparative shade in which they placed me. There was a strong contrast between us too, which served to destroy any thought of rivalry. We were both impetuous, but Hugo was more yielding and somewhat fickle in his pursuits; I was more thoughtful and determined, and generally took up a common object where he had left it off. He was imaginative and fond of poetry; I was but little of a book-man. His spirits were inexhaustible, and there was a note of exultation in his joyous laughter that thrilled like a trumpet in my ear: yet his tears were almost as ready as his smiles, and his large bright eyes would fill, not only at the recital of any tale of sorrow, but of any noble trait of character, or gallant action.

Even the higher sources of pleasure, all exquisite sensations of mental enjoyment, produced the same effect on his finely-sensitive organization. Nevertheless, he was no whining sentimentalist, or vain, pensive dreamer. His instinct was to be ever in advance of all his comrades,

whether as a student, a sportsman, or a soldier; yet his nobler nature shrank from every triumph that his genius or his daring won at the expense of others, and his self-sacrifice in abandoning his well-won prizes often passed for indifference or inconsistency.

I well remember when he was about to leave school, the eagerness with which he looked forward to the first place and prize in the concluding examination. I had then been entered at the University, and was admitted to occupy the strangers' bench together with my father and others who were interested. I think I see Hugo before me now, almost motionless at his absorbing task; so calm, indeed, that but for the perspiration that sometimes glistened on his broad white forehead, a looker-on might have supposed his mind to be as passive as his frame. In quick succession he mastered all his trials, and toward the close of the examination but one competitor remained; a boy of patient and untiring industry, the son of our village curate. The prize of the day had been a life-long object of ambition to him and to a father who had been his only tutor; for many a year the poor churchman had toiled to qualify his child for an honor that secured to him not only distinction but independence. The trial had hitherto proved how ably, as well as earnestly, the effort had been made, for his son had obtained equal marks with my far more gifted brother. One subject alone remained to decide the victory between the two young rivals.

Hugo, carried away by the spirit of emulation, was unconscious of everything but his approaching triumph; a glance at the papers was sufficient to assure him; he raised his eyes to where we sat; they met my father's gaze, and, in a moment, communicated this proud confidence. But at the same moment, Hugo observed the poor curate's anxious eyes making the same inquiries of his son's countenance; they read no hope in the boy's embarrassed and care-worn aspect. Hugo could see the old man's color mount to his forehead, and then leave it deadly pale; his form was bent downward, and his long lean fingers convulsively twined in one another.

To be brief, the Examiner approached; the curate's son faltered through a few imperfect answers and was silent. Then came Hugo's turn. I was accustomed to read his thoughts in his transparent countenance, and I was not surprised to see a shade of generous sorrow for a moment struggling with a bright unconscious smile. He answered the first question as I expected, promptly and lucidly, but then he became embarrassed, faltering and—silent. Finally, and with evident reluctance, the Examiner pronounced him beaten, and the next moment, forgetful of all ceremony, the curate clasped his son to his sobbing but exulting heart.

At first my father's face flushed with bitter, if not angry disappointment; but he soon read something in Hugo's look that changed his mood. "I see it all, my generous boy," he whispered, as he pressed the young scholar's hand; "I see it all, and I thank you from my soul for the decision that you made; one such victory over yourself is worth a thousand over others." Hugo returned the pressure of his father's hand, but, from that time forth, no word or sign escaped him that could tarnish his young rival's triumph.

I select this circumstance from a thousand others equally characteristic of my brother, rather

because it recalls a happy period of our lives, than because it is remarkable in itself. During the autumn following this examination—three years before the war broke out—Hugo and I were both at home. Every life, as well as every nation, seems to have its Augustan era—and this was ours. Everything seemed to prosper with us, and to promise a long continuance of happiness. My mother's health, that had long been delicate, now seemed to rally; the King appeared inclined to wiser councils, and had consented to call a Parliament; the harvest promised an abundant yield, and the nation's pulses beat prosperously high. Then was my father a proud as well as a happy man, with his two sons, whose only rivalry was displayed in pleasing him. The danger that he had long apprehended for the throne appeared averted; he had sanguine hopes of the new Parliament, to which he had succeeded in returning his best friend as member for the county.

I must confess, however, that few of these higher considerations had much weight with Hugo and myself in those days. We were in the glorious morning of life, whose sunshine turns every object into gold; what imagination painted, hope strove to realize, and made amends for every failure by raising new illusions. Independently, too, of all the pleasures that are common to every young and healthy boy, we had almost every indulgence that could render our lives a holiday. My father, as fond of field-sports as ourselves, took pleasure in providing us with the best horses, the keenest falcons, the stanchest hounds, the steadiest dogs. As an old soldier, he took pride in seeing us the surest shots, the best fencers, and the boldest riders in all the country's side. He was a zealous supporter of village sports, moreover, and all neighborly meetings, and we thus became early acquainted with all our countryfolk. Among these were few who belonged to our own station in life, but those two who alone possessed deep interest for us would have concentrated our affection if the world had been their rivals.

Our nearest neighbor was Sir Janus Demiroy, one of King James's newly-invented baronets, the purchase of whose titles an old knight pronounced to be "the very simony of honor." The father of Sir Janus, a wealthy goldsmith of London, had purchased a large property, only separated from ours by a river that opened on the sea. The residence of the Demiroys was scarcely half a mile from Beaumanoir at low tide, when the boundary river could be crossed by means of stepping-stones. This residence was very characteristic of its owner, the nearest desire of whose heart was to be on good terms with both King and Demagogue. It had changed its name with its appearance, and was now called Castle Bifrons, in place of the good old Elizabethan manor-house of Saxonybury.

Sir Janus had begun to build during the palmy and unquestioned days of royalty, and Inigo Jones had been encouraged to lavish on the southern front the most graceful and noble resources of his art; loyal emblems were profusely distributed among the decorations, flourishing round the family crest, a chameleon. A broad terrace, spreading to the sun, gave the mansion a very courtly air: two long strips of a very gay garden ran along beneath this terrace, and were flanked by plantations of thick laurel. Over this favored

space, flocks of pigeons were constantly career-ing, and pompous peacocks strutted below as if it was their own domain.

The northern front, however, of Castle Bifrons had been completed after the new power of the Puritans had displayed itself, and no contrast could be stronger than that exhibited between this recent building and the former one. It consisted indeed of nothing but a flat brick face; parsimoniously pierced with narrow windows, not an ornament, not even a mullion, could be there detected. In front of it was a square space of close-cropped turf, surrounded, as by a wall, with tall, stiff, dark trees; and varied only by formal gravel walks. The sun never shone upon the high and narrow hall door that opened out upon these solemn precincts, and there was never seen a living thing that could regret his absence. No bird was ever known to sing, or grasshopper to chirp there: some dismal old rooks, with a few pensive owls and bats, were the only creatures that voluntarily addicted themselves to what Sir Janus considered the true Puritanical taste in architecture and landscape gardening.

Sir Janus would fain have passed his life in peace and quietness in some central apartment, standing neutral between these two discordant aspects of his mansion. But in his anxiety to avoid giving offense to either party, he found himself encumbered with many difficulties. His Cavalier acquaintances were necessarily welcomed for the sake of old times that might return; the Puritan for the sake of new times that might continue. When the former arrived, they were directed by the lodge-keeper to take the southern approach; when the latter appeared, they were requested to take the northern. At the south front, Lady Demiroy arrayed in rich taffeta and starched lace was waiting to do the honors of the castle; at the north, Sir Janus, dressed in drab garments of the plainest form, received his guests meekly, as one who desired to be all things unto all men. That desirable object was becoming daily more difficult, however; so that the Baronet had at length relieved himself a little by leaning toward the Puritans. He felt safer by doing so, as he was married to the sister of a zealous royalist; and this clever lady made the most of her brother's politics in the presence of the King's supporters, though always (theoretically) open to conviction when any important Puritan attempted her conversion. Her Ladyship had, in short, adopted the politics of Sir Janus, and the household only seemed to be divided against itself in order that it might stand, whatever were the storms of the state.

This well-suited couple, so wise in their generation, had but two children, and these were fortunately daughters. A son might, perhaps, by some bias of his own, have inconvenienced the family politics, and destroyed the trim of the vessel which the parents labored so assiduously to preserve. But daughters had no right to exercise independent opinions, even if they possessed any.

CHAPTER III.

One came with light and laughing air,
And cheeks like opening blossom;
Bright gemmas were twined amid her hairs,
And glittered on her bosom;

And gold and costly jewels deck
 Her round white arms and snowy neck,
 And pride and joy are in her eye,
 And mortals bowed as she passed by.

Another came; o'er her milde face
 A pensive shade was stealing,
 Yet there no grief of earth we trace,
 But that deep holie feeling
 That mours the harte should ever stray
 From the pure fount of truth away,
 And hope and faith were in her eye,
 And angels bowed as she passed by.

ZILLAH and Phœbe Demiroy were just emerging from woman's brief childhood at the time of which I speak. They had slept in the same cradle, been lulled to sleep by the same songs, played the same plays under the shadow of the same old trees, yet were they different as night from morning. Every hour in developing the features of the mind and body, rendered the increasing contrast between them more striking. Zillah had all the deep and solemn beauty of the former; Phœbe all the hopeful bloom and joyous brightness of the latter. My brother and I had grown up in almost daily intercourse with these fair girls. Without lingering on our childhood's experiences, I shall only say that when our ripening years gave form and strength to our passions, we loved our young companions with an entire affection. If I dare speak for them, I should say that they then felt almost as much for us. They had found in us, in our anxious services, in our proud protection, all the requirements of brothers; and we were indebted to them for the social refinement and instinct of courtesy that usually sisters alone can teach, or unconsciously inspire. The progress of my affection would be as difficult to trace as the ripening of the bud through blossom and flower to the tempting fruit. But ever, as that fruit became more exquisitely desirable, it seemed also to become more distant and unattainable: it is the nature of enthusiastic youth to stand in awe of imaginary difficulties, while those that are real, it proudly tramples under foot and scorns. Thus there was nothing in my position with respect to Zillah, but Zillah's self, that was likely to prove an obstacle to my highest hopes, and I no more doubted her love than I did mine own.

Nevertheless, there was something in her look and manner that struck me—almost with awe. Even in childhood, her aspect had always worn a certain mournful expression that seemed to plead for sympathy for her imaginary sorrow. As she grew older, whether some real sorrow, or the mystic and religious studies to which she was then devoted, had increased her melancholy, she became daily more thoughtful and retired, and even Phœbe complained that she was changed. I often then wished that I could have assumed Hugo's pensive and imaginative character, as being more consonant to hers, but perhaps I was mistaken. When the merry and bright-minded Phœbe gave that preference to my thoughtful and poetical brother, which her more imaginative sister gave to me, perhaps each found a truer sympathy than the superficial eye of strangers could detect.

I was full of faults and errors, which an impetuous character and too unrestrained an education had made rampant over some honest but humble qualities of good. Zillah seemed to feel that she had a mission to convert and ennoble my rugged nature, and in our early years she

strove to read, and watched earnestly over my wayward heart; when it became her own, she perhaps shrank from the difficulty of what was then self-knowledge.

At all events, she gradually estranged herself from an intimacy which to me seemed as necessary as the air I breathed. When I was in her company, she no longer extended to me the timid but affectionate confidence that I had shared so long. Ensnared behind her embroidery frame, or apparently studying some gloomy volume of Genevieve binding, she only spoke to me from time to time as to a mere visitor, and then relapsed into silence. The sole indemnification, if I can call it so, that I received for this sad change was, that it seemed to be accompanied by a sense of self-sacrifice. Calm and motionless as she sat, my eager eye could detect the throbbing of her heart when I approached her, and when some chance expression or sudden exclamation induced her for a moment to raise her eyes, their glorious light was often half quenched in tears.

I was no sentimentalist then, whatever I may be now. If anything of that nature is discoverable in my story, it has been acquired in scenes where most men lose any that they once possessed; in wars and trials, and suffering and sorrows, that have inspired me with some doubt as to what is truly real or ideal in this world of strange illusions. I was no sentimentalist at all events, at the time I write of, but a downright, willful, impetuous boy, to whom it seemed that all things must perforce yield, as my horses and even my schoolfellows had done; nay, even the stormy sea that foamed along our iron-bound coast had failed to conquer me, and in more than one stout struggle for my life had been compelled to bear me safely to the shore. With my boyish love had grown up a fierce ambition to win a name and fame by any means, that could render me worthy of her, a girl of sixteen, before whom her aspiring knight now stood shame-faced, and embarrassed by her embarrassment.

Each time that I left Zillah's presence, I resolved to ask for an explanation the next time that she was alone; but that was seldom now. I did not indeed feel restraint from the presence of Hugo and Phœbe, who were generally seated together in some deep set window niche; and there the merry maiden would sometimes be wop to momentary silence by some of his strange stories; or the sound of his voice would be broken into fragments by her laughter; or some poem, as rapidly as uttered, would be travestied by her in whose praises it had been carefully composed. But such company as these happy creatures afforded seemed no longer to suffice to Zillah. If her mother was not present, either her Ladyship's chaplain, or the dark-browed Puritan, who filled the same (honorary) office for Sir Janus—was surely there. Sometimes, however, I must confess that one or all of these were sufficiently distant to afford a temporary privacy; but then Zillah's quick perception anticipated my intention, and by some quiet but ingenious words, and still more by a look of irresistible appeal, she would again defeat my boyish resolution.

One pure taste of happiness in her love I experienced, and that was about a year before my story formally opens. We had merged so imperceptibly from childhood into youth, that no restriction upon our intimacy had even suggested

itself. Our leisure hours were still passed together; and, hawking or hunting, or strolling by the sea-shore, the delicate but noble form of Zillah could seldom be seen unattended by a tall, strong, active stripling, whose earnest eyes watched every glance of hers, whose eager ears drank in the sound of every word she uttered. Yes! those were supremely happy days, in which I wandered by my Zillah's side, brightened with the glorious dawn of youth, and love, and hope; and listened with smiling incredulity to her grave warnings, that this was a world of trial, not of indulgence or reward.

"And if storms *should* close over the summer of our life," I said to her one evening, as we wandered by the sea-shore, "they will but enoble and dignify our career, when bravely borne. One short hour ago, yon sea was calm as thy heart, shining and azure as thine eyes; now that the sudden gale has changed it into a passion of foam and purple, it is grander and more glorious, if less lovely than before."

"And behold the consequence!" cried Zillah, clasping her hands in dread, but still clinging to her argument.

As she spoke, I saw a tall ship unmanageably flying before the wind, her torn sails streamed wildly in the blast; and then, soon after she became visible above the waves, she struck upon the sands. The wind, blowing right on shore brought to our ears the hoarse commands of the stout captain, the shrieks of women, the confused and struggling sounds of hardy men struggling for their lives. Two boats were hastily lowered, filled with living beings, and almost instantly overwhelmed. Still the waves ran higher, and seemed more ravenous for their prey as the good ship stood at bay, and bravely, for awhile, resisted every wave. At length there was a momentary lull, and then a wilder gush of wind and waters. The sea foamed high over the tall spars, and as it swept along left not a trace behind it.

When the ship first burst on our view so suddenly, I stood riveted by surprise, and still more by the pressure of Zillah's hand upon my arm. But I soon flung off my cloak, and rushed to a small boat that lay sheltered in a creek of calm water within the promontory. Hugo then came up and eagerly assisted me, but I would not permit him to venture with me into such a surf; brave as a lion in all other circumstances, he had always a horror of the sea, and had never learned to swim; it was my favorite recreation, and the waves had been my choice playmates almost from infancy. By the time we had got the boat ready, pieces of the ship and more than one lifeless and mangled form had been dashed in upon the shore adjoining to where the little boat still lay, scarcely rocked by the eddy of the waters that raged so fiercely a few yards off. As I was about to leap from the shore, Zillah, for a moment, held me back, but quickly recovering herself, exclaimed,

"Then go! you would never forgive me if I stayed you. May He—" the rest of her voice was drowned by the wind that now roared wildly; the waves foamed high and redly in the sun's last rays, and a ghastly and bruised body came rolling into the calm water as if to rest—"I may soon lie like that!" was a thought that rushed through my mind, and through Zillah's too, I thought, for as I pressed her to my heart, I could

feel hers beating wildly, and she scarcely strove to free herself from my ecstatic embrace; then she shrank back, and I leaped on board the boat, nerved with supernatural strength, and shoved away. Away! among the breakers, and the little craft raised its bows to meet and mount an overwhelming wave; with a strong sweep of the oars I urged her over, or rather through the curling surge, and shot down the slope of waters beyond; the next wave nearly turned the boat over, and the third fairly swamped her.

I was defeated in my hopes of reaching the wreck, but I saw near me a young figure striking out bravely, though evidently failing fast—another languid struggle, and he sank, swept beneath the horrible waves by the under-tow. I plunged from the light I scarce hoped to see again, and caught the now lifeless form; then rose upon a breaking wave, and struck out desperately for the shore. Again, and again, I was dragged back by the resistless force of the surf, and almost drowned by the boiling spray; but the thought that Zillah was looking on, that Zillah was there to welcome me, nerved me for every fresh attempt—and at length I conquered—one long, sweeping wave bore me onward on its crest, and then dashed me with my prize upon the beach. Stunned by the shock, I could yet feel dragged backward by the returning stream as I lost all power to resist it. But Hugo, though he could not swim, rushed into the water, and seized me; I was saved, and my prize, in whose hair my grasp had fastened with drowning tenacity, was also rescued from destruction.

By this time numbers of people had arrived from the village; they did what they could to be of service to the crew of the lost ship; but their care was vain. For hours and days corpses after corpse continued to be washed upon the coast, but mine was the only stranger saved alive.

Meanwhile, I had lain with my unconscious head on Zillah's knee, while she chafed my temples with her delicate hands; the first consciousness of returning life I felt was that of her soft warm tears upon my cheek. I *would* not waken from that happy trance, until I saw poor Hugo's face bent over mine in agonized suspense, and then I started up, and in a few minutes was myself again. But Zillah and Phœbe (who was there too) were hastened away by fears of alarming the castle, for it was now late; as Zillah turned away, her parting glance stirred my heart with the almost only proud pleasure it was destined to receive.

Although much bruised, the poor fellow I had dragged ashore was little injured, and after a night's rest was able to render an account of himself. He was an orphan, he believed; born, as well as he knew, in Ireland; of his parents he knew almost nothing, but he maintained that his father had been some Irish king. He himself had been lost or stolen when an infant, and brought up by pirates, whose vessel some years after had been captured by a royal frigate. The pirates had been all hanged or transported to the settlements, and Bryan, as my protégé called himself, had been adopted by the captain of the ship that took the pirates. He had followed his new friend ashore, been educated as one of his family, and, with the exception of an Irish accent and style of expression, he might at this time have passed for a most intelligent English school-boy. His friend, the captain, dying, he was cast

upon the world, and had entered the ill-fated ship as a passenger, to work his way from Hull to the new settlements in America. For the first day they had had fine weather; the next, while running along the coast, under a press of sail, they had been overtaken by the sudden storm, capsized, driven ashore, and Bryan remained the only survivor out of a crew of twenty sailors, besides many passengers.

For the first few days after his deliverance, the poor boy seemed appalled and saddened by the scenes he had witnessed, but his buoyant spirit soon rose above all care, and when he found himself installed as my page, his delight knew no bounds, and he swore by some comical oath that "the storm was one of the best friends he had." From that time forward he was the most faithful follower that ever served for gratitude. Whatever were my pursuits, he adapted himself to them with wonderful versatility, and on the mountain, by the stream, in the hall, or by the covert, he was ever at my side, with a watchfulness that nothing could escape, and an activity that no exertion could fatigue.

And meanwhile where was Zillah? The day after the shipwreck she had left the Castle to visit Colonel Hutchinson's family in Nottinghamshire, and I soon afterward went to London on business of my father's. For some reason, he never went thither himself. When I returned home, Zillah was also returned to the castle, but her absence had wrought in her a further change. She had become more thoughtful than ever, and whether it was some maidenly fancy of having shown too deep an interest in my escape, or that some other subject occupied her thoughts, I know not. She had been always unlike other girls of her age—was that provoking, yet interesting originality to increase with her years!

CHAPTER IV.

Methought the billows spoke and told me of it;
The winds did sing it to me.

SHAKESPEARE.

ONE memorable day—the last of my bright, joyous, thoughtless youth—I went with Hugo to the castle to take my leave, previous to an absence of some months; the next morning I was to return to the University. A bright and beautiful day it was. Autumnal tints were already scattered among the woods on the promontory. The river sparkled brightly among the green meadows, and the sands, left naked by the tide, shone like embossed gold. Owing to the steepness of the valley that divides our grounds from those of the castle, the easiest way to the latter lay along the sands, over which a dry passage was afforded by a long line of massive stepping-stones, through which the river flowed. This passage was only interrupted at high tide, but that tide came in so suddenly (as at the neighboring "Wash" of Lincoln) that no human step could evade it if once overtaken. There was, however, but little use made of the passage, and its danger was only traditional; the last accident having happened a long while ago.

Thither we now bent our steps. My mother and her little child had accompanied us as far as her strength permitted, and when she left us to

return, Hugo begged hard to have his little playfellow to take with him. I have already noticed the delight he took in the company of this child, who returned all his affection in his own silent little way, and now eagerly extended his arms to be taken up. My mother reluctantly assented to Hugo's wish, and he bore off his prize in triumph, entertaining him with snatches of old songs, to which his charge kept time with his hands, and uttered every now and then shrill musical cries of pleasure.

So we went buoyantly along. For the twentieth time I was determined to have an explanation with Zillah, which, when I recalled all the scenes of our sweet childhood, I could not doubt would prove all that I desired. I was on the point of leaving her and home; but youthful hope and aspiration made the prospect of a new career delightful, and bore me forward to the hope of a happy meeting soon. Even if I had been inclined to despondency, however, the merry laughter of the child, and Hugo's exuberant spirit would have forced me to be cheerful. There was no happier brotherhood in merry England on that fine morning.

As we passed the stepping-stones, Hugo walked some paces on the dry sands to collect shells for his little playfellow, and I believe he would have stayed there, but for my eagerness to reach the castle. At length I persuaded him to leave the shore, and we reached our destination without any incident.

We found Zillah and Phœbe in the library, alone; but for the Puritan, who was occupied in a corner with a book. We were welcomed eagerly by Phœbe, and kindly, but calmly, by her sister. They had seen us from the window crossing over the sands, and Phœbe took her young lover to task for having lingered by the way. Hugo pleaded the child's pleasure as his excuse, and as its soft little fingers were now twined in her long ringlets, and its little rosy lips were eloquent with its own inarticulate language, its plea as well as Hugo's was allowed.

"And now," said the latter, "I must not stay. I have promised my mother to restore her treasure within an hour, and she is coming down to the sands to meet us; so good bye!"

I scarcely observed his departure. I was absorbed in watching Zillah, who sat at her embroidery frame more pale than ever, and, if possible, more silent. I have but a confused idea of what passed; I moved about the room irresolutely. I approached her several times, and as often retreated. I asked Phœbe some question, and, without waiting for her answer, proposed the same question to her sister. She replied without raising her eyes from her work, and I almost felt a sensation of anger and impatience toward her. I was resolved to take advantage of the temporary strength of mind that feeling gave, and I approached to take my leave. Her hand trembled I believe, for part of the embroidery frame, at which she was working, fell to the ground; in endeavoring to pick it up, our hands met; it was the first time for months. That soft, warm touch in a moment dissolved the spell that bound me. I grasped her hand passionately, and, in a tone that sounded strange to my own ears, exclaimed:

"Zillah, for once and forever tell me—" The fall of a ponderous volume, and a step close behind her, made the trembling girl start from her chair and look round. The Puritan chaplain

turned at the same moment, as if to apologize for his inadvertence; but, as he stooped to pick up his accursed book, I thought I read an expression of stern but momentary reproof in his dark and fiery eyes. Zillah, however, took no notice, or seemed to take none, of him, or of the circumstance that had caused his interruption. She rose from her chair, asked me some commonplace question about the time of my departure, wished me kindly farewell, and glided from the room.

I was left alone with the Puritan, who appeared so absorbed in the examination of the book-shelf, that not a symptom of any other thought was visible on his pale, impassive countenance. I had never seen one of his class so near before, and I now gazed upon him with a mixture of curiosity, jealousy, and indignation. He had been one of those churchmen who preached against the Church, at least, against what Archbishop Laud conceived to be the true church doctrines. He had been expelled from his living on this account, and forbidden to preach in England under heavy penalties. Sir Janus, therefore, had offered him an asylum, moved to that act of generosity, not only by observing that popular feeling was much excited in the schismatic's favor, but in consonance with his own new reforming arrangements. His high-church chaplain required some equipoise, and Hezekiah Doom was installed in the office of French preceptor to the young ladies of Castle Bifrons. For this office, a long residence at Geneva had qualified the divine, and the rarity of his accomplishment accounted for the conduct of Sir Janus in the eyes of most royalists.

Not so, however, in the eyes of Mistress Phoebe: she hated or adored every living creature that came within the ken of her ardent spirit, with a sincerity very trying to her parent. Phoebe held the King in enthusiastic reverence, and proportionably detested the Puritans, and every man, or measure, that was opposed to the royal will. The Rev. Mr. Doom was her especial object of dislike; not only because he was in her eyes a downright rebel, and little better than a heretic, but because he was a sort of rival to her dear old chaplain, who had christened and catechized, comforted, and counseled her in all the little sorrows and difficulties that her young life had ever known. Hugo, of course, had been inoculated with Phoebe's distaste for the Puritan teacher and had pictured him, in his imagination, as a mixture of Calvinist, Jesuit, and devil.

The little that I had heard of the divine was, accordingly, not much to his advantage, but I was forced to confess that his appearance impressed me favorably, even at the moment of my angry disappointment. If his frame wanted elasticity, it was nobly formed, and the energy that ought to have animated it seemed not dead, but dormant: the stoop so habitual to students diminished his apparent height, yet he bore himself bravely, as one who had resisted and dared death, and would have done so even at the martyr's stake. His dress was of the sternest simplicity, and suited well with the ascetic character of his countenance: the blackness of his long, lank hair made that of his coat look faded, and gave strong effect to the marble whiteness of his high forehead. His other features were well formed and attractive, notwithstanding their severity; but his eyes were peculiarly remarka-

ble, and the most distinguishing features of his face. I can only describe them as being *lurid*, a strange mixture of gloom and fire that defied every attempt to detect their color.

All these observations I made afterward; for the moment, I only darted on my disturber an indignant glance, which produced no more effect than lightning upon ice. Some words, very different from a benediction, had almost escaped me, but they were checked, half uttered, by the meekness of the man, and by my consciousness of his inability to resent them. I turned on my heel, and moved toward Phoebe, who had retired to another window from that at which Hugo left her.

"There," she exclaimed, with pouting lips, "there is that ungente brother, so hasty to be gone from here; and he no sooner reached the sands than he sat down to play with that little darling child that he loves a thousand times better than he does me—after all!"

"Nay," said I, "my sweet Phoebe, you know how prone he is to self-sacrifice, and it was only to keep his word with my poor mother that he tore himself away; he was to await her at the shore. Would that I had only such cause of complaint against—" I was interrupted by a fearful cry from the Puritan.

"God of my fathers—the tide!" he exclaimed, as he sprang out of the window upon the lawn, and darted away toward the fatal passage with lightning speed.

What was his speed to mine, when I beheld the fearful sight that had so moved him! The tide was pouring in breast high, and had already filled both channels on either side of the bank where Hugo had been lying in fatal security; the sea was perfectly, awfully calm—only a slight foam crested the oncoming and gigantic wave that had not time to fall, so swiftly was it rushing. For a moment I saw my loved brother start to his feet; he held the child high in air with one hand, and with the other he seemed instinctively to try to stem the tide. Fearful picture of weakness against omnipotence! It lasted but one second: then, the high wave rolled on, and left behind it a calm, deep silvery channel, beneath whose unbroken surface my brothers lay whelmed. A spasm of pain for an instant prostrated my strength, but its revulsion swelled my heart with the strength and daring of a thousand men. Bounding away over turf and fence and crags, I felt as if borne through the air; it was but a quarter of a mile to what was now the sea, and in less time than it takes to tell it, I had plunged beneath the surface. My strength and powers seemed multiplied supernaturally, I shot through the waters by mere volition, and my eyes detected every object on the sands. But once I raised my head, to measure the distance from the shore, and then again diving, I beheld a sight that will never, never leave my memory.

Hugo's body lay stretched among some rocks, half mantled with sea-weed, from which his arms emerged, stretched toward the child that seemed just torn from his grasp: its poor little body lay, as if softly sleeping, upon the smooth yellow sands, its little hands extended toward the bright world above, from which it had been snatched so suddenly. For a moment I hovered in suspense over those two forms, and then in pity to poor Hugo, judging for him by myself, I first

caught the child in my arms, rose to the surface, and struck out for the shore with desperate energy.

"If the child be dead," I thought, "of what good will Hugo's life be to him?" I reached the land, there were already people there—my mother too, but she had fainted.

"He may live yet, my blessed baby!" exclaimed the poor child's nurse, as I placed his little body in her arms.

I waited for no more. "Thank God!" I shouted wildly, as again I plunged into the sea, and struck out for Hugo's cold resting-place; but I was too late. My hope had been anticipated: the Puritan, though outstripped, had followed me closely, even when I dived, and was already bearing my brother's body to the shore.

I will not linger on the moments of agonizing suspense that passed, while people strove to resuscitate the two rescued forms. I will not attempt to describe my feelings, as I saw a faint streak of color dawn momentarily into the child's white cheek, then vanish—and forever.

I will not dwell upon the recovery of Hugo, so long protracted, so mournful. It takes but a few sad words to tell that the child was soon joined in death by his broken-hearted mother: when wrapt in her cold arms, within the self-same shroud, the happy infant was laid beside her in the grave.

CHAPTER V.

I shall grieve down this blow.

— Learn, good soul,
To think our former state a happy dream,
From which awakened, the truth of what we are
Shows us but this: I am sworn, sister, sweet.
SHAKESPEARE.

OUR house of mourning was fearfully changed from the aspect in which it had lately presented itself. Hugo, so long its life and spirit, now lay languishing in dangerous illness. I too had suffered severely from my excitement on the first day of our sorrow, and been sick almost to death. I believe it was fever that so prostrated me, and for many days shrouded me from misery in insensibility. My father was left alone to wander from one sick-bed to another, a mere ghost of his former self, through the silent scenes of his departed happiness. When, at length, Hugo and I were pronounced out of danger and permitted to meet once more, we seemed to awaken to another state of being. We had left a world of happiness and hope: we revived to one of misery.

There is no use in dwelling upon sorrows that if none can paint, none can comprehend but those who have experienced them. These last need no reminding of the change that comes over us as regards all heaven and earth to the bereaved mourner. "The soul refuses comfort," which indeed is but a mockery when our whole life seems darkened—when our sorrow seems precious to us—and we clasp it to our hearts, as the war-horse presses on the spear that pierced him.

Hugo rose from his bed of sickness a mere shadow of his former self. The fire from his eye, the color from his cheek, the elasticity of

his tread—all were gone. His form was bent under the weight of grief; his voice had lost its cheerful music, and sounded hollow when he spoke. He seemed to wish only for solitude, and would sit for hours in his lonely chamber, gazing, with strange fascination, on the fatal sea.

My poor father was still more changed, but he strove bravely against despondency. He thought it unmanly to yield beneath the pressure of his calamity; he even bore himself with a sad cheerfulness, especially in Hugo's presence, and a stranger might have supposed that he scarcely missed the wife of his bosom—the child of his old age.

This did not last long, however; his affections were stronger than his pride or his philosophy, and he began to give way under his trial at the time when we almost hoped he would have begun to recover from its effects. The winter's chill fell heavily on his weakened frame, and he was soon confined altogether to his room; not ailing, or at least not complaining, but unnerved, and unhappy, as he was wont to say, in his uselessness. The daily progress of public events were also such as to increase his despondency. The long hoped-for parliament had met, and at once assumed an attitude hostile to the King; too hostile, in my father's opinion, though their sense of public grievances, as they were called, was scarcely more acute or indignant than his own. In one important aspect he widely differed from the prevailing party: his reverence for the person and the office of the King was inviolable.

But before I enter into the stirring scenes that so soon followed the dissolution of the Short Parliament, I must return to the young inmates of the castle, on whom our calamity had fallen with little less severity than on ourselves. Sir Janus and his wife were kind rather than otherwise, and sympathized, after their fashion, with our sorrow. At the same hour precisely, every day, their messenger arrived, "with their service, and to know how it fared with all at the Manor;" and once a fortnight, a great coach, drawn by four stout horses, dragged her ladyship to our door to make the same inquiries in person. But she was a notable housewife, and seldom stirred from home, where the buttery and various store-rooms, and every department within and without the castle found her in constant occupation. Sir Janus had been attending parliament, the Puritan divine had disappeared two days after his important and brave service to us, and the young ladies were left almost entirely to themselves and the old chaplain. But for a long time I had seen nothing of them.

There is something in sorrow which sublimates our feelings; crushing all the petty interests and vain fancies that occupy our lighter moments, and concentrating our thoughts upon their higher aims. Our duties stand out in bold and prominent relief, as our rootless joys are withered from among them; even love, if it be but a fancy, shares that fate; but if a passion, it grows strong, and flourishes in the absence or the silence of all others; at least I found it so. To Zillah alone my thoughts ever wandered from my desolate home, and found refuge, comfort, counsel, in her imaginary presence. Her image had ever been blended with all my prospects and ambition, and it now became identified with the sorrow in which they were all absorbed. In brighter days she had appeared to me as the

angel of chivalry; she was now to me what "Nuestra Señora de los Dolores" is to the devout Spaniard.

My departure from home had of course been postponed, and several weeks had elapsed before I ventured to leave poor Hugo's side. My first excursion was to the castle. No one could approach its gates without having been perceived, and I was therefore surprised to find Zillah alone. My surprise was increased when she came forward to welcome me, kindly and frankly, as in our earlier days. She had evidently prepared herself to do so with self-possession, but when my sorrow-stricken and changed appearance struck her view, she forgot all her determinations, and, bursting into tears, she sank down upon the window-seat, without attempting to withdraw the hand so eagerly clasped by mine.

It was long before I spoke, fearing to break the spell that, for the moment, won for me such sympathy. I could have gazed forever on her spiritual and sublime beauty—a beauty that appealed not only to the senses but to the soul, and raised my admiration into homage. Now she seemed lovelier than ever; the usually meek and unconscious expression of her countenance was touched with tenderness, and betrayed feelings that could not and would not altogether be subdued. Young and inexperienced as I was, I felt the importance of that moment; but I know not whether it was instinct or despair that made me clasp the weeping girl to my heart. I dare not say that she lingered for a moment there, but certainly it was not ungently that she freed herself, and assumed an attitude of calm and unpretending dignity. I anticipated her first words: I pleaded timidly but passionately the revulsion of feelings, long sorrow-stricken and suppressed, that had burst from my control involuntarily, and thus revealed themselves.

"Zillah!" I continued, "I know you well, and I know that from this moment I must be to you either a stranger, or that which I do not dare to name, until I shall have proved myself such as you shall never blush to own. No boyish impulse dictates these proud words and prouder hope; such as I am, you have made me—such as I shall be, you will have caused me to become. You have been ever my hope, my ambition, my inspiration; and you must henceforth be my guardian angel or my destroyer."

I went on speaking rapidly, for I feared her reply; I recalled our childhood with all its tender incidents; I spoke of her changed manner, and distant coldness, and even ventured to recall the circumstances of the fearful day when we had met last, and then, as I thought, had separated for a long time to come.

While I thus indemnified myself for past silence and restraint, Zillah stood with averted face, leaning her forehead on her hand. When at length I ceased, she looked round upon me with a countenance from which every trace of emotion had been banished, and with a somewhat tremulous voice that soon grew firm she replied,

"Reginald, my friend, my brother,—let me still call you so—let me still think you so. You see I am not angry with you; it was natural, after your great sorrow, that you should feel strong emotion in sharing a sister's sympathy, and your ardent imagination has exaggerated your kind thoughts of me—nay, has put upon them a construction that you and I must both

forget.—Do not interrupt me, I entreat you—you know not how much it has cost me to undergo this necessary interview before we part. Yes! we part, and as far as human judgment can foretell, there will be trying times and many changes ere we meet again—if ever that may be.—I pray you, hear me patiently.—Your long and loving kindness to me deserves my confidence, and, painful as it may prove to both of us, you shall hear the reasons of my past and future conduct. I do not fear misconstruction from you, or that you will think it unmaidenly in one so young as I am to speak to you with all the candor that your affection for me deserves."

Thus far Zillah spoke firmly, as if it had been a set task to her to do so. The modulations of her musical voice, however, betrayed emotions that their mere tenor contradicted; so that, chilly as were her words, their sound soothed me in spite of the stern sense they were intended to convey.

"Reginald," she continued, after a slight pause, "You know my father's feelings, or rather want of feelings, on the subject of the dissensions in Church and State that now agitate our dear country. You know how you used to laugh at me for being absorbed in strangely grave books, instead of the gay stories that once charmed you and Phœbe and us all, when we used to sit together under the old beechen bower. But somehow, when I was quite alone; when—when—you were away at school, and Phœbe was occupied with her fairy-tales or music, and my father with everything—except me—at such times I used to find time hang so heavily on my hands, that nothing but setting myself a task could divert my dullness, or keep my thoughts from wandering"—(here Zillah sighed, but added quickly)—"from wandering unprofitably. With this view I possessed myself of one of the controversies with which Sir Janus endeavors to 'preserve himself from prepossession on either side,' as he says; I read that book, at first patiently, then with interest, and, finally, with eagerness. I fear," she added, with a melancholy smile, "that in some things I am carried away by my fancies as easily as you are, and my first sympathies with the stern and high-souled Puritans were merely what I should have felt for heroes in our old romances. I soon began to examine their tenets for myself, and the majestic simplicity of their spiritualized form of faith and worship strongly impressed my imagination. I compared their political principles with those of which even I had heard some complaint, and a veil seemed to fall from my eyes. I saw our glorious country, and its generous, manly people abandoned to the despotic will of the bigot Laud, the renegade Stafford, and a Machiavellian King. Nay, do not start; I only tell you what my prejudices led me to believe. I inquired of Sir Janus, if these things were true; he told me, 'that there was a great deal to be said on both sides,' and at last he decided that 'young maidens ought not to occupy their heads with such matters.' But it was my heart, and not my head that was now interested; the sublimity of the question, as it seemed to me, fascinated my thoughts. Why had I been taught to feel with Luther and Calvin, if religious freedom was not the birthright of the soul? Why had I learned to admire the struggles of the Greek, and Roman, and the Swiss, and the Palatines, if civil liberty

was not the first of earthly blessings? Then Mr. Hampden's cause came on: he appeared to me as the Leonidas, or rather the Luther of the cause, for which, like them, he seemed to be created, in order to make the first great stand. In short, you will be shocked, my brother; but I was become what they would call a Puritan in religion, and a rebel in political belief. Yes! but it would little signify what a mere girl like me thought of such things, but for the effect that her belief produced upon her life, and perhaps on that of others.

"You know how anxiously my father has maintained his connection with our cousin Hutchinsons, on account of their influence with the new popular leaders; you know how I used to shrink from my yearly visit to them in London, in their dark, dull street, while Phoebe was delighted to find herself with our courtly kinswoman, the Lady Carlisle. This last year, however, I looked forward to London with interest and pleasure. I longed ardently to see and hear the great reformers, of whom I had thought so much. Mr. Pym and Mr. Holles, nay, Mr. Hampden himself, were often at my kinsman's house, and I hoped in such society to enlighten my doubts, and inform my understanding. I was disappointed; I scarcely ever saw any of these celebrated men, except for a moment. They were always full of important affairs, and closeted, when they came, with my uncle. Many persons, also, who were said to belong to the Court party, formed part of these assemblies, and amongst these was the wise and good Lord Falkland. He seemed, however, to my great surprise, tolerated rather than liked by the patriot party, and his attempts at general reconciliation were but coldly received. When this young lord was present, there were no closetings, and I often sat unnoticed in the room during his conversations with other guests. One day he was speaking with great asperity against the bishops, and he found on this subject a most willing audience. Mr. Pym, with great ingenuity, contrived to lead him on in argument, until at length he appeared to follow, instead of leading, Lord Falkland in his eloquent denunciation of Church tyranny. Amongst others, he instanced the case of an able, upright, and eloquent minister, who had been deprived of his benefice, without a hearing, and then, in a manner, outlawed by Archbishop Laud. He spoke at such length of this persecuted divine, that I became deeply interested in his cause; I made many inquiries concerning him afterward. It ended in my writing to my father, who never refused me a request. Lord Falkland, also, at Mr. Hutchinson's request, applied for him; it was nominally to oblige the latter, that the Puritan, whom you have seen and have reason to remember, was received into this house."

During this long explanation, I had once or twice attempted to interrupt the eloquent and unconscious casuist. I was prevented, partly from observing her evident anxiety to complete her task, and partly through my bewilderment at hearing such grave and to me distasteful and dry subjects so discoursed of by a young and tender maiden. I could have listened, too, to that dear voice with gladness and gratitude, whatever was the subject, as long as its music vouchsafed to flow. I almost forgot the strange matter of her

words in the pleasure of listening to them; and all that I remembered was some curiously framed imaginative story, that with pleasant originality selected Puritans and politics as its theme. It was told with such artless truth, with such a diffident yet candid confession of what she called "heretical and rebellious" fancies, that I felt my regret at these strange and deep convictions more than repaid by the gratified pride of being so trusted by her.

There was something, however, in the latter part of her confessions that rather jarred upon my ear, especially as her clear tones appeared to falter as she spoke of the Puritan whom she had so unaccountably taken under her protection. It was not jealousy that I then felt flushing through my cheek, but a sense of indignation toward what I considered the designing arts of a fanatic. I could not but suppose that he had taken advantage of her girlish enthusiasm in order to awaken as lively an interest in his own behalf, and to exercise it in a manner not altogether in accordance with my romantic ideas concerning her refined and delicately sensitive character.

Zillah observed the embarrassment of my silence, and could note even the sense of my obligations to this man, which prevented me from speaking of him in the round terms that were ready to escape my lips; then, as if, to relieve me, she continued, in a somewhat saddened, but firm and almost proud tone:

"You seem, Reginald, to wonder at my peculiar taste, perhaps at my rashness, in involving myself in such studies and such scenes. I almost share your surprise when I look back upon the last twelve months; but my conduct, believe me, was not inspired by girlish caprice or obstinacy. I seemed to myself to be led by some high power along a path, which was so uninviting, and which the more painful it became, the more I felt called upon to tread—like the devotees I have read of in Popish pilgrimages."

"And this Puritan," said I, "this martyr, did you, as a penance, admit him to your confidence, and strengthen your convictions with his impartial opinions?"

Zillah looked at me with surprise, and then gravely added: "I was too much disappointed in the expectation I had formed of my intended tutor to profit by his opinions in any way. I saw him for the first time here, on my return from London, and I could scarcely believe that such a young and comely person was the reverend and out-worn looking man to whose age and infirmities I flattered myself I had been instrumental in affording refuge from his enemies."

"A thousand thanks, dear Zillah, for your candor; while rapt in the pleasure of hearing you, I have forgotten all the questions that your words suggested. Answer me but this one: why did you so estrange yourself from me, and why—if I dare to ask without danger of renewing it—have you now broken through that estrangement?"

"Yes, I will tell you. I was at first reserved toward you, because I then hoped to prevent you from advancing toward what, you have this day done. I have now become frank and confidential with you, partly because I was moved by the thought of all the sorrow you have undergone, and then in the hope that you will retreat into that dear and valued relationship of a brother, which you once allowed me to think I possessed, and which"—

she paused a little, as if in search of the fit expression, and then added, hesitatingly—"is the nearest tie that ever can unite us."

Though not a little astounded at such a termination to this long sought interview as these words conveyed, I was little disposed to yield to them their due authority. I was almost inclined to smile, and to rally the young speaker on her sybilline appearance, and the prophetic style in which she spoke. There was something, however, in her look that deeply moved, if it did not awe me. Tears stood trembling in her soft bright eyes; her form was dilated, and her small hand grasped convulsively the mantle-piece near which she stood. Whether truly or falsely, she believed that she was then pronouncing the sentence of her life.

As I was about to speak, Lady Demiroy approached; the jingling of clustering keys, scissors, corkscrews, and a variety of other implements that hung from her capacious girdle, resounded through the gallery, and gave me only time to whisper eagerly that I was content to be brother—*ay!* Puritan, rebel, or Anabaptist itself, if I might retain her confidence until—I could be something more. Then the wide door swung widely open, and her ladyship appeared, dispensing a volume of compliments and inquiries, that were only interrupted by discovering that I looked pale, and required a certain infallible cordial, the virtues of which turned the tide of her ideas. Perhaps her womanly or matronly instinct, too, divined something of my late conversation, for she turned anxiously to Zillah with inquiring looks. They met no answer there, however; her daughter had leant forward toward the window, as if something there had arrested her attention, and Lady Demiroy exclaimed:

"I had almost forgotten to tell you, my dear young friend, that a messenger from your father seeks you, and seems in haste. They say there is strange news abroad, and I have just received a post with many letters which it may contain tidings you will wish to learn."

But I was already moving toward the door, and making my parting salutation.

"Farewell, Zillah," I whispered, "for the present:—to-morrow—"

"To-morrow, you will be far away, I doubt not," she replied; "you will follow what seems to you the path of duty; and may heaven guide you in the right way!"

So saying she left the room by an opposite door, and the next moment I was in the saddle and galloping toward home.

CHAPTER VI.

He is wit's pedlar, and retails his wares
In courts and camps, in towns and country fares.
ABRAHAM.

He's reason's renegade; one with whom
The word *consider* is too troublesome;
Who doth obey his passion and affection,
Whose cogitation is the child of action.
JORDAN.

I HAD scarcely cleared the first inclosure, when I observed Phoebe riding in the same direction, with her favorite old chaplain jogging by her side.

"I have been wishing to meet with you," said I, "and even hoped that you would wander on with me so far as home, in the hope that poor Hugo might get a sight of you; he has only too much need of your bright presence to cheer him."

Phoebe turned her horse's head at once toward our house, and spoke tearfully of all the changes that had taken place there. But sadness was not natural in her young buoyant spirit, and she soon began to interrogate me as to my visit at the Castle, "where, doubtless," she said, "you have seen my most unsisterly sister."

"I cannot apply to her that epithet," I answered, rather wincing at the recollection of her fraternal injunctions, "nor, I should think, can you, with justice."

"She is no use to me as a sister, I mean to say," maintained Phoebe, "she is so changed, and solitary, and thoughtful. I do believe she has turned Puritan, though even that odious Hezekiah had little of her conversation, notwithstanding she brought him upon us for our sins."

"But he soon relieved you of his presence?" said I, inquiringly.

"Ah! yes; and thereby hangs a tale.—You need not look curious; I hate mystery, and I will tell you all about it. In the first place, you must know he was once a soldier, and served bodily, or carnally, as he would say, in the wars at Rochelle. He then had some other name, which doubtless was a good one, or he would not have changed it for his present denomination. He was taken prisoner by the French, from whom he escaped to Geneva, where he became edified into his present condition. Some time since a post came from the rebel leaders, who, it seems, are collecting their forces, and, an hour after, our gloomy friend had vanished."

Here she ceased; we had entered our grounds and met Hugo, who said that he had come to seek me, as a stranger had been to visit my father, and inquiries were instantly made for me.

This intelligence changed the current of my thoughts. I scarcely regretted that I was obliged to forego the rest of Phoebe's story: she and Hugo remained together, and in a few minutes I found myself alone with my father.

He was alone, and seemed unusually agitated. "Reginald, my son," said he, "the long-expected crisis has arrived, and we must part, I fear, at once. You have heard of my visitor?"

"I have heard," I answered, "that a French pedlar insisted on seeing you, and that when he was denied on account of your illness, he wrote some lines in a strange tongue, which at once procured him admittance to your presence."

"He is a pedlar," said my father, "who deals in dangerous wares. In a word, he comes with dispatches from the Queen, and Her Majesty's communications, with reverence be it spoken, are seldom of good omen to our country. My visitor brings solemn tidings too, which you shall hear from his own mouth, as far as he chooses to reveal them. I shall only give you one caution; imitate our friend Sir Janus for once, and avoid committing yourself prematurely to our guest. I am bound by my promise to keep his secret, and by my honor as a servant of the king to obey his directions; but I would rather His Majesty had chosen any other messenger, both for his own royal sake and mine."

So saying, Lord Hastings walked to the door,

and admitted a most singular-looking personage, who entered with a jaunty air, flung an inquiring glance round the apartment, and saluted me with exaggerated courtesy. He carried a light pack upon his shoulders, which he flung off with practiced ease, and placed carefully upon the table. His disguise, if such it was, was admirably sustained; not only his dress, gaudy, soiled, and wayworn, and his hair and beardless chin were those of a French pedlar, but the very expression of his countenance seemed suited to his calling; the tones of his voice, the anxious twinkling of his eye, the shrug of his shoulder, the nervous activity of his fingers as he proceeded to undo his pack, would have precluded the idea that he had been ever otherwise engaged than now.

"Milord," said he, "I hafe here, besides what I hafe show you, one ting dat will just shute my noble young master here; if he be de son of my noble lort, and of one soldier heart as his appearance do promess."

"We are here," said my father, who was in no mood for mumming; "as safe as closed doors and honest company can make us; this is my eldest son; I have little doubt that he will be at the disposal of his King, as all his fathers have been before him; but he must choose for himself when he learns as much of your errand as you are disposed to trust him with."

"Well, then," exclaimed the stranger, drawing up his fine figure into an attitude that contrasted strangely with the mean dress he wore, and throwing into his voice and look an irresistible frankness and fascination; "I have no disguise with a son of the House of Hastings: into your hands, young Sir, I am about (I trust) to commit the safe-keeping of the King's secrets, of my honor and my life. But before I ask you to accept such a charge, I must tell you all the danger that you run in doing so. I am George Digby, the abhorred of the Parliament, the outlaw of the Close Committee, the Achitophel of the pamphleteers; in addition to which I fulfill at present the character of a spy, just escaped in a most comfortable fishing boat from your good town of Hull, and its most worthy governor, Sir John Hotham."

It was, indeed, Lord Digby; the most accomplished courtier, the most eloquent orator, the most daring soldier, and the most eccentric and original person of his time, whom I then beheld. I was then at the age and in the mood that thirsts most for action, and my heart bounded at the prospect of adventure, that now seemed to open before me.

"I know not what may be required of me, my Lord," I exclaimed; "but there is my hand in pledge that, with my father's good leave, I will stand by you to the death in all that may concern the welfare of my country, and the honor of the King. I am but too little acquainted with the state of public affairs; but sure I am that the path pointed out by my father must be that of duty, and one which it becomes a gentleman to follow."

"There spoke a true son of Hastings," said Lord Digby, cordially grasping my offered hand, and then turning to my father, he added, "This youth recalls old times, my Lord, when you were as prompt and fearless in your service; yet it was spiced with somewhat of a reservation that marred your high fortunes at the Court, and deprived us finally of one of our worthiest supporters in our

hour of need. Well! well!" he continued in a more cheerful tone; "your Lordship was perhaps quite right, but now we have a cause that leaves no room for hesitation. Since Falkland and Ned Hyde have joined us, we may well calculate on those who have warmer blood within their veins."

"The time is indeed gone by," said my father, sadly, "when men of honor can remain neutral. As long as mere opinions were at issue, I esteemed myself happy in my peaceful retirement, apart from all the strife of party, and endeavoring to preserve my children from the passionate prejudices that so distracted England. Now that the sword is drawn, and the honor of the crown and the existence of our liberties is threatened, shame befall the man who seeks for shelter in obscurity—may it cover him and his name forever. 'Ay, my Lord,' he continued, as the color mounted to his pale cheeks, and he walked the ground with a firmer tread, "I will confess your visit was at first but little welcome to me: it not only recalled former scenes that I had long striven to forget and to forgive, but it brought a summons that I knew would be irresistible to my son, my companion, the stay of my house, the comfort of my declining years and failing health. But all the reservation with which you challenged me just now, is gone. That son is even now at your disposal, to be your guard and guide. My contingent of men and money for the King shall soon follow with his brother; unless, indeed, I myself may be allowed and able to wait on my sovereign in person. I seem to have grown stronger since I have been thus roused from my sad lethargy, and it may yet please Heaven to permit me to accompany the royal standard to the field. But now time presses: you, my Lord, will need some refreshment after your long and perilous adventure; you will find it in the adjoining chamber, and while you are so employed, I will tell my son in a few words what it is most necessary for him to know. Then he shall be ready to attend you."

So saying, he led Lord Digby into the ante-chamber, where the wondering, but silent butler had prepared a meal but little in accordance with our visitor's assumed character. Excited as I was, by the novelty and nature of the events that came crowding so rapidly on my mind, I could not help pausing for a moment to watch the disguised Cavalier, who had relapsed suddenly into the garrulous Frenchman, his whole soul apparently occupied on the savory prospects spread before him. The old butler with wondering eyes and busy hands could scarcely seek for and supply the innumerable wants of the dusty pedlar, who seemed to take delight in yet farther bewildering him.

"Mille remerciemens, my very goot Lort," exclaimed the impostor, as he devoured with his eyes the various viands on the table; "nevare since I did have de honore to wait upon de Cardinal Richlieu wid de blessed relic—de pocket handkerchee of de eleven tousand vargin of Cologne, (and someting else)—nevare did I be so honored vid grand hospitalite; I am quite ashamed. Now master butler, vill you be so goot as to cut that jambon, dat ham, more tin, and vill you have goodness to pool off dat ving of capon, not to coot it vid de dam knife. Now, pleeze, von verre of de Canary, or rader of dat oder bottle vid de spider veb upon him. Tanks, mine vary goot

friend," he continued, to the indignant butler; "and now von slice of dat pasty, coot it deep, vere de juices do lie perdue."

Leaving, as I thought, a rapidly ripening quarrel between the eccentric nobleman and his displeased attendant, I followed my father once more into his own room. He left the intervening door wide open, in order that Lord Digby might, if he chose, hear all he said; but the etiquette of the courtier appeared to vie with his own, and he continued his gastronomic volubility uninterrupted, so as to drown all sounds except his own.

"Reginald," said my father, "you must leave me almost immediately on an expedition involving considerable peril to yourself and others, and one that will require much skill and caution to accomplish happily. You are as yet little practiced in worldly affairs, but your own religious faith, your sense of honor, and the memory of what you owe to your ancient name, will preserve you and guide you in all difficulties. What I most fear for you is your rashness and love of danger; these, if hitherto venial, become most grave faults when you have the lives of others, and perhaps yet higher responsibilities in your keeping. The strife which I have long fearfully anticipated is broken out; the King is to raise his standard within a week. The Roundheads are already mustered in strong force, with the design of capturing his sacred person. Lord Digby is lately arrived from Holland; he announces coming supplies of money and arms from the Queen, but at present there is an almost utter want of both in the royal camp. You will start within the hour to escort our visitor in safety over the Wolds, where already the disaffected are on the watch for him. As soon as our troops can be mustered, they shall follow you to Nottingham: poor fellows, they are ever ready to follow our pennon, notwithstanding their usage in the Scotch campaigns, when that dastardly traitor, Holland, so dishonored himself and them. You will tell his Majesty, that with the permission of Providence, he shall have some sixty arquebusers, well mounted and equipped, with armor for as many more, at his service, within four-and-twenty hours. Tell him also, that such money as I shall be able to raise, and the best part of my plate, shall soon be forwarded by a safe hand, to his Court, at Nottingham. Tell him, likewise, that I have sent my sons, all that remains dear to me on earth, to conquer or to die beneath that banner which was never unfurled since the Conquest without a Hastings to support it. Now go, and prepare for your journey. My old groom, Dick Blount, will attend you; he is cautious and slient, and as true as steel. I suppose you will want to take your wild Irish page, but I doubt he had better follow with the rest; he is scarcely fit for such secret service as the present!—Well! if you can depend upon him, let him go. The black pony for the Pedlar will make four horses in all, more than enough, considering the paths you will have to take. If you should meet with any interruption, you must endeavor to evade it if possible. Avoid violence to the very last; but remember, whatever happens, that our guest must go free; not so much for his own sake as for that which he carries. He should wait for the stronger escort, but I fear it might attract attention, and by the time it was ready, the country would be up; besides, time

presses. Now, farewell, my son; troublous days are approaching, and it may be long before we meet again. Be firm and unfaltering in your loyalty to the King, and, above all, to the King of Kings. Let no vain controversies entangle your reason and obscure your clear and single-minded sense of duty. Whatever may be that of others, yours is simple; keep it so. Take with you, as my last precept, the homely motto of our family: 'STICK TO THE CROWN, IF YOU FIND IT HANGING ON A BUSH.' And so—"

CHAPTER VII.

— Seek the King,
That sun I pray may never set! I have told him
What, and how true thou art; he will advance thee;
Some little memory of me will stir him,
(I know his noble nature,) not to let
Thy noble service perish too.

SHAKESPEARE.

THE sun was setting as we rode away from my venerable home. Our pathway led upward, toward the hills; and at each receding step I could more distinctly trace the whole scenery within which my childhood had been passed. The sun's last light was playing on the various towers and gables of the old house, and flushing all its western windows with a fiery red, but all the lawns, and woods, and the distant sea, were already silvering in the moon's pale rays. A white vapory mist rose gradually from the low grounds, and gently veiled from my earnest gaze the prospect that I shall perhaps see no more. Notwithstanding the proud thoughts and hopes that swelled my heart, and the delighted sense of novelty and adventure that thrilled through my brain when I leaped upon my horse, and heard the clank of steel ringing merrily round me—notwithstanding all this, a deep and sad sensation of despondency came over me, as we moved away in silence over the grassy sward. By a strange revulsion, too, when we passed by the old chapel, I almost envied the repose of that calm burial-ground, where my mother and her child lay sleeping.

But just then a trumpet rang out cheerily from the adjacent village, and told that the gallant yeomen had already obeyed the summons of their Lord, and were mustering. At the same time, as if awakened from his own reveries by the same sound, my companion broke forth into his usual rhodomontade of foreign jargon, and completely put to flight my graver thoughts.

"By de beard of St. Denis," said he, "my young master, you and your goot peoples be von vera silent companie, and I sall fear to find my own tong steef vadin my moult when I sall vant it, if it be ever vanted in dis silent cowntre. By your goot leaf, I have something for your privat ear, if it be pleasing to you hear me speak it."

I motioned to my attendants to rein back their horses, and Lord Digby resumed:

"As soon as we are out of your own neighborhood, I shall take leave to dismount from this good nag, and to proceed on foot, as more beeseeming my supposed condition; and since I shall then have to maintain due distance toward you, I would fain make use of the short space that remains me of improving our acquaintance. To tell you the truth, too, that old Rhenish wine of your good father's, which Mr. Choppin dealt out

to me in large though grudging measure, has made me feel very sociably disposed. I confess, also, to having some spice of early romance still lingering about me, and this is a time, and scenery, and circumstance, that might well excuse a little sentiment. Sidney's 'Arcadia' would require nothing more romantic than our present situation.—And lo! as if some spirit conjured up by the imagination—behold a comely damsel and a reverend man. Comely! she's beautiful, by all the fairies! Una and her Archimage were never better met."

The Una proved to be Phœbe; the Archimage, her old chaplain. It seemed that she had accompanied Hugo almost to our house, and in trying to find a short way home, had missed her way among the woods. Her venerable guardian, having trusted himself entirely to her guidance, was equally bewildered, and far more uneasy, on finding himself thus belated with his charge.

"But now," she exclaimed, after this explanation, "pray tell me how *you* happen to be here, for the whole world seems in a state of confusion, as if the Roundheads had taken the place of Providence, which doubtless they would gladly feel called upon to do. Here are trumpets sounding, men galloping to and fro; strange vessels arriving in our quiet bay, and strange people landing from them; and finally, you and I are met here at a most untimely hour; you clad in armor, and I seeking my way like a heroine of romance!"

"My vera lofely and resplendent young lady," said the Pedlar, anticipating my reply, "I am, in my poor person, the cause of this noble young gentleman's present appearance here, and in this varlike guise. I am de strange man, landed from de strange ship; and stranger still, I haf see you in de house of von great Cavalier Comtesse, vid," and here he sunk his voice, "vid one great Roundhead on his knee, making very moche prayer."

Phœbe started, and stared with astonishment at the Pedlar, who went on nodding his head, as if to say he knew more than he chose to say. Then drawing near to me, she whispered:

"In Heaven's name, whom have you here, Reginald?—or are we indeed all bewitched? Zillah, you tell me, was prophesying to you this morning what already has come true; and this outlandish coxcomb has reminded me of a secret that might have defied the Witch of Endor."

"I am pledged to secrecy," I replied laughing; "but your best way now lies through the forest, out upon the common, whence you can canter home as fast as your reverend companion finds convenient; meanwhile, we shall have the advantage of your company, and your soothsaying Pedlar may perhaps make further revelations to you, even if your quick eye does not anticipate him."

Phœbe was charmed with the prospect of adventure and mystery. She was well aware of the state of indignation, if not alarm, in which she should find Lady Demirov, but she trusted to her own wit and favor to make light of it, and so she rode on merrily. The Pedlar, with an assurance that would have highly provoked, if it had not amused her, drew up close to her side; in a few minutes he so entirely engrossed her attention, that I found myself glad to fall back upon the old chaplain, from whom I was in hopes of hearing something of what was nearest to my

thoughts. Who has not experienced the interest that we take in everything we see or hear that may possibly transmit a word, or look, or thought from or to her who rules over the world of our imagination?

The Chaplain was a very aged man, who thought little of all modern and worldly things, except his lovely pupil; but his memory was richly stored with old legends and memorials of that past, to which he seemed entirely to belong. The subordinate station which, unfortunately and unwisely, our household clergy occupy* had rendered this venerable man very meek and retiring; but when the ministration of his own high office was required, no archbishop in the land could exercise it with greater dignity. I know not what was the secret sympathy that existed between him and the capricious beauty whom he loved with all the fondness of a nurse toward a favorite child, but he and Phœbe were almost inseparable companions.

The good old man now jogged contentedly along upon a sedate pony, that was white with age, but nevertheless had zeal enough still left to chafe because it was no longer by Phœbe's coquettish little palfrey's side. The rider was somewhat bent, but he kept his saddle like one long used to it; his white hair floated on his shoulders, between his broad-brimmed hat and the cloak peculiar to his calling; his countenance wore an expression of resignation peculiar to itself, and had often interested me. I now ventured to ask him whether it was fatigue or the news of the morning that made him look so grave.

"Nay, noble sir," he answered, "my old limbs have become almost as unconscious of fatigue, as my mind of fear. I know indeed that the people do furiously rage together against our anointed king, but I do also know that they imagine a vain thing."

"May it be so?" I exclaimed; "but tell me, reverend sir, how long is it since you have lost your coadjutor at the castle?"

"Nay, noble sir, he was no coadjutor of mine; I had neither part nor lot in him. He belonged not to our fold, though I trust the Shepherd will yet call him in his own good time. He had some summons, I believe from the disaffected, who require his ministry more than my good patron did, and he hasted away in the night season. I know naught of him since then, and almost as little did I know before. He is gone, however, and I pray that he may have grace to guide him. For me, I would also fain be called to gird up my loins for travel, for they say that the King is about to raise his standard, and I would that I could see and bless it before I die. But my young lady waits, and I fear our roads part here."

Phœbe had reined back her palfrey in order to turn homeward; and when I rode up to her, I observed the traces of some emotion on her usually joyous countenance. She wished me very cordially farewell, and with a distant salutation to my companion, she turned away at a rapid pace toward her home.

Lord Digby and I rode on over the common in the open moonlight; he looked for a few minutes after the light form of his companion, as it faded

* In the time of which our Cavalier writes, the chaplain, in great families, occupied an almost menial position, as every one now knows.

away into the forest, and exclaimed with a sort of sigh :

"Pity it is, that the world—such as we have made it—should darken over a bright soul like that. I was jesting with her just now and amusing myself with her surprise, and yet she has wakened in my own heart more thoughtfulness than my present critical position could inspire. But we are coming, I presume, too near our border village to waste time on sentiment ; I will therefore briefly satisfy your very natural curiosity as to how I became acquainted with you fair damsel.

"You know she has been on a visit to our reigning wit and beauty, Lady Carlisle. There I saw her, but she saw me not—at least she saw no Pedlar. My Lady Countess was delighted to have possession of such an attraction for the men as her beautiful young kinswoman ; and Mistress Phoebe, though a mere child in years, soon found out her value, and the influence over her patroness that she might pretend to. I confess to you, that when I first found that girl in such an atmosphere, I thought she must be aware of her danger, and on the watch to make the most of it. But I soon discovered my mistake ; I saw she was perfectly ignorant of her hostess's true character, and that her own purity had kept her unconscious of the viciousness that surrounded her. I was touched, I scarcely know why, by her situation ; and I resolved to rescue her, in an impulse of romantic feeling, for which few of our fine ladies would credit me. I watched her closely, and soon found my opportunity.

"You are perhaps aware that my Lady Carlisle aspires to hold the balance between the contending parties in the present conjuncture : the Queen's confidence on the one hand, and Pym's intimacy on the other, enable her alternately to deceive both ; and if she were as much mistress of her love as of her loyalty, she might doubtless become as formidable as she is mischievous. But her passion for that rogue Pym is sincere, though so unaccountable that she escapes its imputation. Now, it so happens, that her Roundhead is as little loyal in his love as in more important matters, and no sooner had our fair rustic here appeared upon the stage than he was captivated by her. He has not much time, you may suppose, for trifles, and he takes his wine freely like most orators. Well ! the very first evening he met her, I saw him paying eager and unguarded court to his new divinity ; I had only to direct Lady Carlisle's attention for a moment to the tableau that her young kinswoman and the gray-haired demagogue presented, in an adjoining chamber, as the latter knelt to offer her a rose ! The following day Mistress Phoebe was manœuvred into a terror of the London mobs, that were then a little obstreperous ; and she and her sister, who was staying at the house of some rascally Roundhead in the city, were straightway exported to her country ! Oh ! I promise you, it was a rare piece of management on my part."

"Truly," said I, "it was generously and nobly done, and I would fain ask you for further particulars concerning the transaction ; but here we are at the last hamlet that calls my father master, and for the future I can only secure your safety as far as your own wit or my strength can answer for it."

CHAPTER VIII.

Now for your lives—nay more—for honor's sake
Fight, and repel this first rebellious crew.

OLD PLAY.

"WELL!" said Lord Digby, looking wistfully at the pony that had carried him so far, "I suppose I must submit ; but with your leave your page here (who looks a great deal too sharp, by the bye) shall fetch me a beaker of ale to wash my throat, after all its Gallic exercise." So saying, he descended with great apparent caution from his little steed, which was left behind at the hostel whence the disguised courtier was refreshed.

On resuming our march, Lord Digby proposed to walk on so far in advance of us, that we might occasionally catch glimpses of him by the moonlight. The trainbands of the county were up and armed, and patrolling the leading roads for the Parliament. If they stopped our Pedlar, he was to evade them civilly, if possible ; if not, we were to fight for it, and he was determined not to be taken alive, under any circumstances. We had about forty miles to travel, however, and as it was of great importance to push on as fast as possible during the night, I dismounted my page, and requested Lord Digby to take his place.

"Are you then going to leave the boy behind?" he demanded.

"No," I said, "I am about to send him in advance, to reconnoiter, and I promise you that no mortal man shall approach without your having sufficient warning to dismount, and assume your disguise."

"So be it," said the courtier, as he mounted with careless composure : "these good fellows already know me for a countryman of their own who is in trouble, and I do not now seek to hide from them that my life is in their hands. Whether that life be of any value, they shall judge by their reward if we reach Nottingham in safety."

Old Blount smiled grimly and somewhat scornfully, as he muttered ; "Man and boy, I've been trusted by my good Lord this five and thirty years, and it isn't for the like of you, that I'd now fail his orders, whilst I've life to discharge 'em."

"Well said, my trusty yeoman," rejoined the disguised Pedlar, with a more patronizing air than was quite relished by the still puzzled man-at-arms. "And you, my lad," continued Digby, "may I trust you, too?"

"Faith, my Lord, if you do, it's more than you publican would for a pint of ale," carelessly replied the boy, who was busy unlacing his hose, and transferring his shoes from his feet to his girdle.

"How now, sirrah !" cried I, having only overheard the last few words of this dialogue, "do you know whom you're talking to?"

"By the bib of St. Bridget I do, sir, and no wonder, when I heard him tell Mistress Phoebe all about it with his own two lips in the wood below there. I can shut my eyes at your bidding, sir, as in duty bound ; but my ears being open by nature, discourse leaks into them, whether I will or no."

I was about to be very angry with, if not actually to chastise the reckless descendant of the Irish kings, when Digby stopped me ; "I would

give you half I'm worth for that imp," said he; "the rascal must have been fifty yards from me when he overheard the whispers that I breathed into the ears of yonder little beauty. However, I have no fears of his blabbing, except to ourselves; for I heard him baffle the village *coterie* that gathered round him at the ale-house with an air of innocent simplicity that I could scarcely have assumed myself."

"Hark ye, Bryan!" said I to the boy in question, who was lingering near us in some anxiety; "this once I pardon you for letting that tongue of yours wag so freely; but, by mine honor, if it betrays your eavesdropping again, I'll silence it forever, or send you back to the land of your royal ancestors. Now scout out ahead, and if you see anything bigger than a sheep on all the moor, come back like lightning."

The boy tossed his cap up into the air, with a suppressed shout of "Hi! for Hastings!" and bounding forward, was in a moment lost in the mist and out of sight. Meanwhile, we rode on at a steady trot, Blount, with his carbine unslung, bringing up the rear.

"Now tell me all about that wild boy," said my companion as we swept along; "the sturdy groom I think I understand."

"The latter," I replied, "was a trooper in a regiment my father raised long ago for the Palatines. He was one of the few who returned home alive, though he often exposed his life to save his master's in that deadly campaign. He again accompanied him to the relief of Rochelle, the last occasion on which my father appeared in arms for the King."

"You do not know perhaps," said Digby, drily, "why it *was* the last time; for, sooth to say, it is a story that a loyal man would scarcely take as his text in preaching for his king."

I replied that I had never heard my father assign any reason for his deep seclusion, except his own taste, and the power that it gave him of being useful to his tenantry.

"So much the more reason that I should tell you," said Digby, "of what you ought to know. Your father was one of the few men of rank who could be induced, by love for the King, to follow his proud and incapable favorite on that luckless and disgraceful expedition to Rochelle. Buckingham had ordered a retreat as unadvisedly as he attacked it. Lord Hastings remonstrated; the Duke, half-maddened by difficulties that mastered him, replied with insult. Your father, on the return of the fleet to England, challenged him; and I bore an order from the King to Lord Hastings never again to appear at Court. Believe me, I only undertook that thankless office because I wished Lord Hastings well, and desired to soften the blow as much as possible. My motives were misinterpreted, however, and your father addressed me in such terms as I should have resented under other circumstances. From that time he was never heard of until the expedition against Scotland required every true servant of the King's to serve his injured Sovereign. Then the ever-loyal Hastings furnished almost the first contingent; but the King's command was still in force, and therefore it was commanded by your cousin Harry, who was near being banished for challenging Lord Holland when he fled from Dunsie-law and involved the Hastings yeomen in his disgrace. Well I remember Harry Hastings, (or

Hotspur as we used to call him,) mounted on his black charger, Satan, and clearing all before him through the streets of Durham. This story, your father, who is an injured man, was too proud or too judicious to tell you; whilst I, who am what is called a favorite courtier, do not hesitate to do so. In fact, if 'the King can do no wrong,' it must be by a deuced arbitrary stretch of courtesy that your father could be persuaded to that effect. Now, '*magna componere parvis*,' let me hear the history of your fond invisible imp of Ireland, who, I am bound to believe, is doing me good service as a scout."

I thanked Lord Digby warmly for his frank and manly tribute to my father's character, and, indeed, I was by this time quite under the spell by which this courtier won every hearer whom he did not happen in the first instance to affront.

"As for the boy," I added, "I saved him from a wreck on our luckless coast; all the rest of the crew perished, and I found he was utterly alone in the world; so I had him taken care of, and he attached himself inseparably to me. At first he was considered in the light of my servant, but he became furious at the very name. He was descended, he said, from an Irish king, and scorned to serve under a lesser personage—except for love. He was uncontrollably willful on this point, and at length he had his way; he was promoted to be my page, and since then his gratitude has known no bounds. I can now engage him to be all ear and eye, and as anxious for an opportunity of proving his rare qualities as we are to avoid any such necessity. He has still many of the virtues of a savage—fidelity, and wonderful quickness of sense, and such endurance, that (when he gets his shoes off) he will beat any horse in my father's stable. In short, but for this crocheted about his blood-royal, he would be the best page in Christendom."

"They're all the same for that matter," said Digby. "Those Irish kings must indeed have been the fathers of their people, for I never yet met a native of that unhappy island who did not claim to be descended from royal loins."

As we thus conversed, we entered on the Wolds, a long chain of bleak and lonely hills, without anything to vary their monotony but a few old trees. A fine full harvest-moon was shining over this wild country; white vapors from the marshes filled each valley, and left the hill-tops like so many islands floating in a sea of mist. There was to me something very fascinating in the scenery and silence all around us; something that suited well with the mingling shades of mourning retrospect and exulting hope that filled my thoughts. Night-traveling was, as yet, a novelty to me; and though since then I have become familiar with the stars, as they shone down on many a weary march and tented field, yet they have never lost their deep interest, or ceased to influence my fancy. There is one radiant star—Aldebaran they call it—that always seems to shine especially for me. Like the eyes of some fine picture, it seems ever to meet my gaze with a gentle, kindly, liquid light—high and serene above the storms of earth and sky, and only sought for in moments of elevated thought and inspiration.

I used often to compare Zillah to this star. Now that it shone down so brightly and lovingly over my silent but dangerous path, I was fain to

think of the old heathen legend in which the long and lonely watching Ariadne was transmitted to the sky.

While thus absorbed in boyish fancies, time passed on, and I had almost forgotten the momentous purpose of our silent ride, when suddenly a long, low whistle thrilled in my ear and made my flesh creep. I looked round, but I saw nothing save my companion, who was nodding in happy sleep upon his horse, and the gaunt form of the man-at-arms looming large in the twilight behind me. In another moment, I started to find a hand upon my knee; but before I could grasp my pistol, the whispering voice of my page called to me to halt, and my horse stood still. Digby's horse stopped at the same moment, and its rider awoke, his eye flashing clear and bright, and a pistol ready in his firm hand.

"Off with ye!" whispered the boy, "and see you play your part in earnest, for there's little joking yonder. There's six stout men in buff and bandolier, there; right across the only narrow pass in all the hills—bad luck to it for sticking itself in that spot, of all spots in the world!"

Without a moment's hesitation, Digby, dismounting, walked swiftly forward to meet the danger, and soon afterward we followed. At length my anxious ears caught the expected challenge of the sentries, and we were near enough to hear the Pedlar's French jargon in high argument with three or four others who spoke loud and angrily. I halted in the valley, where the mist still concealed us from view, and the soft, moist turf prevented our horses' tread from being heard. Above us, on the hill-side, we could distinctly see the groups of disputants, and the figures assumed a gigantic size, relieved against the clear sky above them.

"Let us give them one volley, Sir," whispered Blount, drawing near me, "and if they don't disperse with fright, at any rate we shall be a fair match for the rest."

The advice seemed plausible to a man accustomed to bloodshed, but I shrank from the thought of taking life as long as there remained a hope of discharging our duty otherwise. I therefore ordered my men to advance a little, and halted them, so as to be just partly visible to our opponents as if they were the foremost files of a column of cavalry; there to remain still as death until I ordered them to advance. I then cantered forward, and only reined in my horse when I came close to the leveled muskets of the Roundhead party.

"Hollo! there," I cried; "ground your arms, and declare yourselves. Who are ye, and what do ye here at this hour of the night?"

The men instinctively obeyed, and lowered their matchlocks; they were but raw trainbands, and as yet uneasy, not only as to the authority by which they were under arms, but at the prospect of coming to close quarters with mounted troopers. There were only four of them; the leader of the party and another soldier being still busy with the Pedlar. I could see that this other comrade was being dispatched, I presumed for assistance, near at hand. The leader at once came forward at my summons, dragging the Pedlar with him by the cloak. I turned, as if to my troop, and called out: "Ride round the hill, and cut off all stragglers; if they resist, cut them down."

Blount disappeared as if swallowed by the

mist, and in a few moments I could hear his horse clambering up the steep hill-side upon the right. The Roundheads, who held the only apparent pass, had not calculated on our knowledge of the country; every bosk and glen of which was as familiar to our hunting experience as those in our own park. They looked irresolutely at one another, and at length their leader replied surlily to my reiterated demand:

"Pass on, thou and thine, in peace, and molest not those who are doing the work of the Saints and the will of Parliament."

"De vork of Saints!" screamed the Pedlar, in a voice that seemed half cracked by excitement and impotent anger; "if it be not de vork of St. Nichola, de saint of thieves, I do not know vat de mean by dere saintly vorks. De have tore de doublet ov my back, de skeen ov my neck, and vorse dan all—oh, dear! oh, dear!—de have stole my pack."

"Silence, sirrah!" I exclaimed; "you are in a land of law and right, and shall have no harm but what shall be made good unto you. And for you, sir," I continued to the Roundhead, who still held his prisoner tightly, "you shall answer this charge elsewhere. Face about your men, and lead me to your officer, who, I presume, is not far off."

The Roundhead chose to adopt the excuse that my words seemed to afford him, that I was entitled to exercise authority; the more so, as an indescribable variety of voices was heard from the misty hollow where I had left Bryan, and on the other side of the pass, such a clatter of hoofs and armor as might have required a dozen horsemen to produce.

"I will do thy bidding, young man," said the Roundhead, at length; "but I do warn thee that there be grave suspicions aenest this ape, whom thou befriendest as a brother. Doubtless, however, thou hast authority, and wilt not see the good cause suffer through thy negligence."

So saying, he flung from him the indignant Pedlar, who eagerly picked up his pack, jerked it on his shoulders, and stepped out after the retreating Roundheads, with many vainglorious gestures and gasconading threats. I waited for a few minutes, until the party had disappeared round the angle, and then whistling to Bryan to approach, I told him to keep an eye on the Pedlar, and to be at hand with his horse, if necessary.

By this time the party had cleared the pass, beyond which lay an open country, for many miles, almost as far as the river Witham. Following close after the Roundheads and their late prisoners, I found Blount stationed at the mouth of the pass, sitting stiffly as beset by a sentinel, with his carbine at the recover. As I passed him he drew up at my side, and whispered, "I was forced to cleave yon runagate's skull in two, for he was about to fire, and would have brought his party upon us before you had cleared the pass. Now, in our Lady's name, let the Pedlar, or whoever he may be, make the best of his way, for there is at least five score of Roundheads by yon farm-house."

It was too true. A few hundred yards off, there was a large watch-fire blazing high among the trees, and ever and anon, dark figures crossed it to and fro.

"There be our picket," exclaimed the Roundhead, in a loud voice, that was meant less for in-

formation than alarm. In a moment the Pedlar stepped lightly back, leaped into Bryan's saddle, and was off like lightning.

"Pursue the villain!" I cried to Blount, at the same time placing myself between the fugitive and the little party who were about to fire. "Back to your post!" I shouted to their leader, "and give the alarm."

Sir John Gell's musketeers were not then so ready with their weapons as they afterward became, and for a moment they paused irresolutely, notwithstanding the voice of their sergeant, who roared out hoarsely: "Fire! fire! fire on the sons of Belial, one and all!"

As I plunged into the hollow, a scattered volley rang about my ears, and long afterward I could hear the loud voices and ringing armor of the Roundheads borne on the breeze.

The first time a man hears the deadly whistle of an enemy's bullet he experiences an indescribable sensation; but with me, all the unpleasantness of it was merged in the consciousness of triumph, as I dashed away into the open plain.

I soon found the faithful Blount, who had waited for the issue of my attempt; had it been unsuccessful, I have no doubt he would have returned to share my captivity or death. His dismal countenance had relaxed into something of a grin of pleasure; but the only observation that he made was concerning my hat, which a Round-head bullet had shorn of its heron-plume. This privation he, as my valet, considered a good ridance, much as I loved and regretted it; the more so as the heron had been killed by Zillah's hawk.

It was some time before I overtook Lord Digby, who held steadily on at a hand gallop; at the same moment, Bryan bounded from behind a thicket, and accompanied our progress with a step as elastic as ever, though he sometimes condescended to rest himself for a few minutes, by holding the pony's tail.

"I should apologize to you, my gallant young friend," said Digby, "for having deserted you so unceremoniously, but that I give you credit for being able to act as difficult a part if you had had the same responsibility." He then paid me some compliments, which few could render so agreeable; and Blount himself looked pleased with his share of well-bestowed praise.

Our ride henceforth was exhilarating in the highest degree: the cool, bright night of a warm day affords delicious traveling; our spirits were raised by our late success, and I observed to Digby, that danger afforded an almost intoxicating sense of pleasure. "Ay," he replied: "*le péril est comme le vin; il monte la tête*, as we say in France."

It was past midnight when we approached Lincoln, which being in the hands of the insurgents, we were obliged to avoid and make a détour by Hartisholme, where we crossed the Fesdik. On the outskirts of the village we stopped to breathe our horses, as we had still at least thirteen miles to travel before we could reach Newark, and we had scarcely drawn rein since we parted from Phœbe, by the forest of Beaumanoir. Digby flung himself carelessly down to rest under an elm-tree, and, as soon as I had made a reconnaissance of the neighborhood, I followed his example. Meanwhile, Bryan had unbuckled his saddle-bags, and produced therefrom

a couple of wedges of deer-pie, some marchpane, and a case bottle of rare old wine, on which we supped right heartily. Blount, who had quite resumed his old soldier habits, lighted his pipe, and led the horses to and fro as he kept watch. Bryan all this while was employing himself busily with my hat, and when he returned it to me, to my surprise, the lost plume waved over it in all its former pride.

"There's a small taste of it missing," said the boy, apologetically; "but I thought as the heron that wore the feather before your honor wore it was killed by the lady's hawk, you wouldn't like to have it trodden under foot by the canting old rebel that shot it off you."

"Then you were by my side, you foolish boy, when the Roundheads fired on me?"

"Where else could I be, your honor? I knew my Lord Pedlar here could be trusted with the care of his own self, and I could do no more for him; so I just crept back to hear what your honor was discoursing to those deceitful villains. And so—but whist! by the powers, there's more of 'em!" So saying, Bryan placed his ear to the ground, and in a few seconds we could all distinctly hear the tramp of armed men. We sprang to our saddles and rode away hastily, followed by Blount, and soon afterward by Bryan who had leisurely waited to recover and put in order his saddle-bags, which he now re-strapped upon the pony as it was cantering along.

Shortly afterward, the first dawn revealed to us the fine old castle of Newark, where we soon arrived without further incident, and were heartily greeted by the loyal garrison.

I have dwelt too long on the trifling incidents of our march, but these were my first adventures, and made more impression on me than many a pitched battle has done since.

We only remained at Newark while our escort to Nottingham was preparing to mount; during which time Lord Digby exchanged his pedlar's disguise for a more fitting suit. Byron, I remember, supplied him with a scarlet doublet, Thorold with a hat and cloak, and their officers subscribed other garments to fit him out after a rich military fashion that became him well. The royal armory supplied him with sword and gorget, the only steel he wore. The crimson scarf, which had become the insignia of our Cavaliers, was not only furnished, but arranged on the goodly person of this courtier by our buxom and blushing landlady, who had known his Lordship in former times.

From Newark we rode post to Nottingham, leaving our horses to follow with the servants, and having for escort a score of Byron's troopers; the latter accompanied us until we came in sight of our destination, and then returned to their quarters.

CHAPTER IX.

Sir, he's a fellow,
To take the devil by the sinister horn,
And twirl him round like a top.

BARRY CORNWALL.

If I have lingered too long on these recollections of my earlier youth, I may be excused by those who can value the innocent happiness of their own; to others I have no apology to plead,

and little interest to offer. I now enter, however, on very different scenes, in which my own experiences and sensations are to occupy only a subordinate part, until my story reaches to my present imprisonment. Were I abroad and stirring in the world, I might write very differently, and far less tamely than now I do; that is, if I were to write at all. For action and meditation are almost incompatible, and when we are abroad and free among the brave, the beautiful, the dangerous, among those who can injure us, and those who can reward, we little think of recording what we have scarcely time to perform. Hence it is that all our descriptions seem so tame—our ruminations so insipid compared with what we fed upon at life's high festival. How different is even the voice of wit or the touch of pathos when "coldly furnished forth" upon mere paper; and far, far more so the soul-thrilling thoughts that require all the assistance of passionate eye and utterance, to express themselves even to the quickened perceptions of those we love.

I have already been occupied for ten days in writing these few pages; and when, in re-perusal, I find their record so different from that memory which furnished them, I am almost tempted to abandon my unprofitable task. The yellow, weedy flower, upon my dungeon wall; the spider I have almost tamed, seem more interesting to me than all my written memorials of scenes and people that once stirred every sense and thought with emotion.

But through the deep silence of my solitude breaks the loud music of a trumpet, and once more wakens the train of recollections that having followed so far, I will follow to the end. The trumpet is silent now; doubtless, the troop it spoke to have guarded to these dreary walls another prisoner, and have now departed, leaving to us the unfelt society of one more fellow-sufferer.

Very differently sounded the trumpet in my ear, when first I saw this old Castle of Nottingham, with the royal banner floating proudly over it. Then my young heart beat high with hope's tumultuous emotions, and my fancy was fired with romantic visions.

* * * * *

"Yonder gloomy castle," said Lord Digby, as we crossed the bridge below the town, "seems to me like some huge den, in which, at length, our royal lion stands at bay, with scarcely a jackal court left that dares to show his teeth. Here's to the rescue, then; and woe to the hunters, when they feel the royal fangs! Now, for the present, farewell, my trusty guide and guardian. I must straight to the King on weighty business, amid which yours, believe me, shall no wise be forgotten. Unless revolution has been also there at work, you will find fair lodgings and a comely hostess at the sign of the Antlers in the Gray Friars; there I shall seek you as soon as my affairs at Court are somewhat settled."

So saying, my indefatigable charge proceeded to the castle with a more thoughtful air than usual, and I was fain to seek mine inn.

The landlady of the Antlers deserved the courtier's commendation, but her handsome features were clouded with vexation: and though she welcomed me with professional amiability, she did not invite me to dismount.

"Alack!" she cried, "that I should be unable to receive a Cavalier of your condition, because my best room is filled with Roundhead hypocrites, who drink nothing stronger than ale, and devour my substance without profit."

I professed my willingness to accept of any accommodation whatever, rather than go farther, and probably fare worse; the town being densely crowded with Cavaliers, as well as with those whom the business, the profit, or the intrigues that always surround a Court, had attracted thither. "Besides," I added, "Lord Digby is to inquire for me here, and I would not miss him."

The sound of this influential name procured an instant summons for the hostler, and an invitation to such hospitality as the house could afford. "You will be pleased to make allowances for my master's parlor—poor man!" said the landlady, showing me into a little cell about eight feet square, and which was but thinly partitioned off from the general guest-chamber beyond. The proprietor of the Antlers was a subdued and resigned-looking person, as it behooved the husband of so accomplished a spouse to be; we found him smoking his pipe, with his ear very close to the partition that divided or concealed him from his guests; he seemed deeply interested in his occupation, but at a signal from his helpmate, he abandoned his lair without remonstrance.

"Here," said Dame Deerly, "your honor will have no disturbance, except what is made by those in the next room, and that seldom continues much after midnight."

A loud and heterogeneous din certainly prevailed there at present: men shouting, singing, swearing at tapster boys and at each other; knives clanging against platters, swords against spurs, and flagons smiting upon the thick oak table: all these and many other sounds seemed to bid defiance to repose, though my hostess took no notice of the uproar. Indeed, she seemed quite willing to prolong our interview, when she was summoned elsewhere by a loud voice in the street that thundered for admittance: a roaring, rough, good-humored voice it was, that afterward I came to know full well. "Hallo! hallo! host of the Horns—where art thou? Is it seemly usage for a noble Cavalier to be left here, sweltering in your foul streets like a popinjay in a July sun? 'Sdeath and wounds! will nobody answer; have we a Roundhead ambuscado here, under the beard of sacred majesty, that refuses to admit his officer? So then, here's for an assault—*vade retro, Sathanas!*"

So saying, the Cavalier wheeled round a powerful and coal black steed, and backing him against the closed door, had the address to make him kick right into it, and that with such violence that the mark of the iron shoes remains there still.

"Saints defend us!" exclaimed my landlady, "here's another; and another of the right sort, too, I warrant me." And straightway the fearless woman opened her beleaguered door, just as the heels of Sathanas were about to do so more uncereemoniously. In a moment the Cavalier had dismounted, flung his bridle to a man-at-arms, and stalked into the hostelry as if the whole world that he trod on was his own. Vainly did the hostess protest she had no room; the intruder replied, with a sounding salutation on the lips of the fair dame.

"No room! By Hebe, there must be a dozen, any one of which will suit me to a hair, whoever is the preoccupied."

So saying, he seized on a jack of ale that was on its way to the parlor, and quaffed it deeply to the King's health.

Dame Deerly was in despair at the thought of losing a customer who so improved on acquaintance. Indeed, it was difficult to resist the prepossession that, in spite of his boisterous and reckless manner, was inspired by the Cavalier; an expression of such joyous good-humor and hearty frankness shone in his fearless eye, and played about his comely features.

He might have been about thirty years of age, but more than one streak of silver could be detected in the long and carefully dressed hair that curled over his broad shoulders. His dress was of the very richest materials, though by no means of the newest; and the light armor and arms that he wore seemed alone to have been carefully attended to.

I had scarcely time to make these observations, when, wiping the ale-froth from his mustachios, the Cavalier strode unceremoniously into the chamber that I occupied. On seeing me, he suddenly changed his manner for one of high-bred but manly courtesy, and addressing me by name, said, that he was come on the part of Lord Digby to send me to his Majesty, who, it appeared, was just starting for Coventry.

"The King is already on the saddle," continued the Cavalier, "and you had better take my horse in order to attend at your better convenience our peripatetic court."

I gladly embraced the offer, and as I mounted, my new acquaintance fondly patted his sable steed; "he has come thirty miles this morning," said he; "but Satan's not easily tired, and your ride will scarcely be long, as the royal train is small, and his Majesty loves to be brief in his audiences."

Thanking my new friend for his services, I rode off to undergo my first interview with the Majesty of England.

CHAPTER X.

The castle gates outpoured light-armed troops,
In coats of mail and military pride;
And 'mid the gallant show, in gallant state
Their monarch rode.

ARTEGAS.

I soon reached the Castle, round the gates of which a number of people had collected to see the King come forth; many of these spectators were trainbands and men at arms; but there were also very many rustics, whose soiled and wayworn dresses proved that they had traveled far to obtain a sight of their sovereign. The gates swung open to a flourish of trumpets, and he appeared; whatever emotion connected with Lord Digby's revelation may have then mingled with my young and ardent visions of loyalty, I can now speak of the King as becomes my father's son.

I felt toward his Majesty, at that moment, something of the sentiment which John Bunyan has since told me he experienced at the sight of a bishop in his robes; the idea of the man was entirely absorbed in that of his august function.

I read in the mournful look that he cast on his saluting people, a vision pregnant with prophetic power, informed by vast and secret knowledge of what was then preparing against him and his kingdom. I saw, as I thought, the destiny of England incarnate in his sacred person.

My reverence was deep as it was sincere, and the courteous bow with which it was acknowledged became a nod of recognition, as Digby whispered my name in the royal ear. In a few minutes the cavalcade had passed; and I joined myself to those who brought up the rear.

Lord Digby continued for some time to ride by the King's side, in animated conversation, and then, with a low and graceful obeisance, reined up his horse, while the King passed on.

"Now, Hastings," said the courtier to me, "the King wants you; listen meekly, answer modestly, but promptly, and with resolution; he will like you the better, or at least *think* the better of you, for presence of mind. You remember the Spanish proverb: 'Todo lo, che no tengo yo.'"

I spurred forward, and in a moment was beside the King, hat in hand, and listening eagerly for the first words that were to fall from majesty. They were not promising when they came.

"Your father, sir, may thank his own hot temper that he is obliged to send a substitute for his personal service to our standard."

The King paused. Whenever he was in the wrong, he always endeavored to excuse it by braving out his error; but his kind heart sometimes failed in his sterner purpose.

Notwithstanding my reverential loyalty, this reception sounded ungraciously; and I replied somewhat proudly:

"May it please your Majesty, when my father permitted to me the high privilege of serving under your royal standard, I knew not that he was himself incapacitated from doing so, by aught save his bodily infirmities."

The King turned upon me a glance of grave inquiry, and then said, in a tone that contrasted strongly with that which he had before used: "Well, well; it is better that he should have left me to tell you that there was another reason, which has only lasted long enough to prove his noble and loyal nature, and which exists no longer. Write to your father and tell him so, and tell him likewise, that if it shall please Providence to restore to me my power, he shall find that I can remember high merit as well as brief offense. My Lord Digby has told me that I am again to see the Hastings' troop, that might formerly have rendered us good service in Scottish land, if we had not been reluctant to shed blood, and if we had not trusted too much in traitors. For the present, your men must form part of my nephew Rupert's regiment, and remain at Nottingham until our return."

So saying, the King held out his hand to me to kiss, and so we parted; he to ride on rapidly toward Coventry, and I to return to my quarters. My heart warmed within me for the royal cause, and I blessed my stars that youth and ignorance had precluded me from being involved in those political questions that seemed so much to embarrass some men's loyalty. For me, I was a mere soldier, and but too well pleased to remain so for the present.

While busied with these thoughts, Satan carried me rapidly back toward Nottingham, and I was soon at the door of my former apartment at the

Artlers. On entering it, I saw Digby there, leaning his head against the wall and motioning to me to be silent and to approach. I did so, and looking through a small hole—used, no doubt, by the landlord for private observation of his guests—I could see the various occupants of the inn parlor. My attention, however, as well as Digby's, was riveted to a small table near us, where sat two persons engaged in close conversation, and inaudible to every one but ourselves, who were just behind the speakers. To my surprise, I recognized in one the visage of Sir Janus Demiray; and though his cloak was drawn across the lower part of his face, and his hat slouched low upon his forehead, I could distinguish in the other the lurid eyes peculiar to Hezekiah Doom. The latter seemed engaged in the hopeless attempt to bring Sir Janus to a decided answer on some matter of importance, and was winding up his argument in a low but vehement voice:

"And thus, my worthy patron, thou hast placed thyself in a position of double danger, from which nothing but prompt and fearless decision can save thee; thou hast advanced great sums of money to the men of Parliament, and earnest proffers and promises of service to the man Charles. The latter, indeed, loveth lukewarm water, but the former will spue thee out and retain thy moneys as thy fine. And then, be it borne in remembrance, the man whom the Cavaliers call King is ever ready to forgive and receive the righteous and the patriot into a favor which enslaves the body and destroys the soul; while the Parliament never forgiveth, nor is there power given unto them to do so."

I was induced thus far to remain a listener, in the hope that Sir Janus would, by his answer, vindicate himself from the dangerous imputations in which the Puritan had involved him: but when I heard him begin his reply with: "Well, I will go no further in this business until I have spoken with Lord Essex—" I thought it high time to interrupt him. I therefore merely said to Digby: "This Sir Janus is well known to me; he is a kind, good man, but easily led." Abruptly leaving the little chamber, I then entered the parlor, walked up through the various guests, and offered my hand to my old friend. He started, and appeared annoyed at being discovered, but his chaplain remained quietly seated at the table, and drew his cloak so tightly over his face, that I felt obliged not to appear to recognize him.

I had scarcely exchanged salutations with Sir Janus, when the Cavalier whom I have before mentioned as the proprietor of Satan entered with half a score of troopers, and walking straight up to my two acquaintances, arrested them in the King's name.

Sir Janus started, and looked at me suspiciously, as if I had betrayed him. The Puritan let fall his cloak from his face, and drawing himself up to his full height, exclaimed:

"Spies and eavesdroppers as ye are—gentlemen as ye call yourselves—have ye so little regard to the character of an ambassador and to your own, as to seize on a man bearing messages of peace and good-will into an enemy's camp, though he be furnished with letters of safe-conduct?"

"Silence, ye owl!" sternly and scornfully shouted the Cavalier, "and know that if I were not bound by orders that I may not slight, I would give thee free liberty, and put thee on thy

defense in another fashion for those words. Guards, away with him to the castle!—As for this gentleman," he continued, turning to Sir Janus, "he will please to accept of my personal escort; and grieved I am to be obliged to act as his gaoler." So, saying, the Cavalier offered his arm to the Baronet, and marched him off.

I was anxious to see Digby to ask for an explanation of this scene, but first I assured Sir Janus of my zealous service, and then following the Puritan, I offered him my hand, saying: "This is the first time, sir, that I have had an opportunity of thanking you for your gallant and generous assistance in the most trying circumstances of my life; I hope I shall now be able to show my desire at least to prove grateful."

The Puritan still held his arms muffled in his cloak, and coldly replied, thus, as he passed on between his guards:

"You owe me far less than you suppose. What I did was done from a common impulse of miscaled humanity. As to your services, I need them not."

I confess I was not sorry that my advances were thus met, but I hastened to Digby, to do what I could in favor of the prisoners. I found that he was gone to the castle, where the Royal Council was sitting. I repaired thither, and on being announced, was requested to enter the large old hall wherein they were assembled.

CHAPTER XI.

Canakin clink, drink, boys, drink!
Under the sun there's no such fun,
As to sit by the fire and see the tap run,
Drink, boys, drink.

METTHOUGHT the personages assembled in that gloomy hall resembled rather a gang of banditti in a cavern than the privy council of a great kingdom in a royal castle. A rugged oaken table was placed across the upper end, or dais, and on each side of this sat half-a-dozen persons, for the most part clad in buff leather or light armor; some three or four others stood around, occasionally taking part in the conversation. A couple of tall candles, in iron stands, were placed upon the rude council-table; these, while they dimly assisted the fading daylight, threw a strong glare on the faces of the debaters, or rather the disputants below.

It seemed to me, that Lord Digby had been giving an account of the arrest of Sir Janus and the Puritan, and explaining the manner in which he had become acquainted with their plans; while Lord Falkland was inveighing indignantly against such an act as unworthy alike of Digby and of the cause he professed to serve. Digby retorted angrily, and Hyde endeavored to divert the rising quarrel by proposing that the prisoners should be introduced. Sir Jacob Astley, however, to my great satisfaction, declared against taking any further trouble about them.

"I know," said he, "these stiff-necked Puritans of old. If you seek to obtain aught from them contrary to their own wills, you will find your efforts vain; their cunning will always baffle ours. Ay, even yours, my Lord Digby, though you are pleased to smile; and their obstinacy will defy all your threats. Besides, what have we against them? The one is an un-

doubted and confessed enemy, of whom, God wot, we have enow; and the other, a paltering trimmer, of whom we have got yet more amongst us. Moreover they have both said their worst: let them begone, say I; and ye that are cunning in such matters, may make a merit of it, if ye list."

"Well spoken, 'most sapient general," cried Digby; "and with your good leave, my lords and gentlemen, in order to prevent all further debate, I am content that it shall be even so. Finding that this was the general opinion, this versatile statesman then called me over to him, and commissioned me to escort Sir Janus and his confederate safely beyond reach of the garrison of Nottingham."

"I need not impress on you," he said, "the importance of convincing Sir Janus that the King is still and always ready to receive him into favor; and that it is to prove our belief of his real loyalty that I send you, his friend and near neighbor, to bear him company."

I was well pleased to undertake this office for Zillah's father, and not sorry to escape from further attendance on a council that appeared to me so little in accordance with my preconceived notions of such an assembly.

I found the prisoners in the same apartment, but the relation between them appeared quite changed; Hezekiah now seemed to be the patron, the Baronet a subordinate: the former paced the room with a firm and rapid step; the latter sat disconsolately at the window, leaning his gray beard upon his hand, and gazing ruefully on the iron bars.

As soon as I informed these uncongenial associates of the purport of my visit, Sir Janus joyfully started up, eager to be gone, but his companion informed me that he had some business to transact in the town. "Either I am a prisoner, or else free," he said; "either detain me, or intermeddle not."

I replied that I had been prescribed a simple duty, which I must perform literally; and, in short, I and my charge were soon riding forth along the valley of the Trent. The Puritan kept aloof in stern silence, but his companion entered eagerly into conversation.

"Sad times are these, my young friend," he said, "when an honest man must either pass for a truculent Cavalier, or a treasonable Roundhead; the saber bridge of Al Sirat is not more difficult to a Mussulman. I have done my best toward both parties, for, to tell you the truth, though I have nothing to hope from either, I do not know which to fear most. I betook myself to Nottingham to seek the King, and here I find myself unexpectedly, as you will witness, sent forward, will I, nill I, to his opponent—the Earl of Essex!"

I replied, that at present the Roundheads appeared the safer side; but as his own presence and protection were so important to his family in times like the present, I hoped for their sakes he would not be long detained in the rebel camp.

"It is for these reasons," I added, "that I gladly undertook to be your escort; your home is so closely associated in my imagination with my own, that it is almost as dear to me."

"Thanks, thanks, kind Reginald!" said Sir Janus hastily, as if afraid I should say more upon this subject; and now methinks by the glimmer

of the moonlight on yonder armor, that your escort is accomplished, and we may part." He pointed to the corner of a grove where a body of horse were assembled, and at the same time he drew nearer to his Puritan companion. "Now, farewell, good lad," he added, "you will bear me witness, that it was by Lord Digby's orders that I have left the King's quarters."

As Sir Janus thus spoke, I heard a trumpet in our rear, which was answered by the party in front, and the next moment two bodies of troopers, advancing at full trot, inclosed our party between their ranks; they wore the orange scarf—the badge of Essex.

The officer in command having halted his men, and of course our party also, rode up to Hezekiah and exchanged with him some words; then turning to me, he desired me to consider myself his prisoner and give up my sword! My sword flew from its sheath rapidly enough by mere instinct, but it was not in surrender! At the same time, hand and spur brought my horse well together, and I rode him at a wall that the ambuscade considered must have hemmed me in. The gallant brute cleared it at a bound from where he stood, and landed in a green meadow at the other side.

"Prisoner!" I then shouted to my challengers; "I defy your best power, with treachery to boot, to lay hands upon me whilst I live." I could hear the clank of a score of carbines as the troopers took aim, and as I dashed away over the soft grass I could also hear a deep, stern, and well-known voice call out: "Recover your arms! Slay not, but pursue!" and then the road rang with the clumsy galloping of the Roundhead horse. I soon regained the road, and excited as I was by the fray, I felt tempted to wait for my foremost pursuer, and let him taste the sword of a Cavalier; but then my father's counsel stayed my own proud will, and I rode forward until I reached the gates of Nottingham in safety.

As soon as I had seen the good Satan stabled and well cared for, I went to the castle to give an account of my adventure, but the gates were locked, the warders set, and Lord Digby gone, none knew whither. I then repaired to the Antlers, and long before I reached that hostel I could hear joyous voices resounding in loud laughter or wild chorus through the open window of the inn-parlor.

Such scenes as I was about to witness were new to me, and I paused for a moment on the threshold; but hearing the governor of the castle's voice high above the din, I entered, and for the first time beheld assembled the chief officers on whom the King and kingdom depended for their safety!

As I before mentioned, a massy oaken table ran from side to side of the long low parlor, and this was attended by two long benches of equal length; at the upper end was a huge chair, in which Digby sat installed as president. The benches were closely occupied by carousing Cavaliers; not a place was vacant, and not a voice was silent as the health of the new governor was pledged in the best wine the inn afforded. I have often thought of that picture since; when many of those who composed it lay stiff and stark around me on the blood-stained field.

There were some fifty Cavaliers of all ages, and of every variety of dress and feature, seated there.

The grim veteran of the Low Countries, in stained buff, and with fiercely curled mustachios, side by side with the young gallant in velvet or plush doublet, his lip scarcely shaded with a downy beard, and his long hair so lately fondled by fair hands falling from a face flushed with wine, and the excitement of a first carouse. A glittering row of swords hung against the wall, surmounted by as many helmets or plumed hats: at every movement of the revelers, as the flagons clashed, armor or arms clanked, and afforded martial accompaniment to the stormy song or cheer.

At the head of this fiercely gay company sat Digby, apparently the gayest and most careless of them all, though to my knowledge days and nights of anxious and dangerous watching had passed over him since he had tasted of repose. This singular man having passed the morning among the graver councilors of the King, discussing various and tedious concerns of State, now seized this evening's opportunity to ingratiate himself with the mere tools of his previous elaborate designs. No one could so well adapt himself to all men's tastes: he was master of every mood, and acquainted with the vagaries of every passion. It was especially in a scene like the present that the versatility and exquisite pliancy of his talents was displayed: by some well applied word, or look, or smile, he had already established a certain intimacy with every man at table, old or young, gay or grave, grim veteran or smooth-faced youth, chivalrous aspirant or sensual debauchee.

As soon as his eye caught mine, he exclaimed, "A place! a place! for our new recruit! What now, my gallant Paladin; what new adventures hast thou crowded into the twenty-four hours that have chimed on old St. Simon's Tower since we began our enterprise?" He heard my report. "What! treachery, ambuscades, and hair-breadth 'scapes? why, 'tis a tale fit for a stirring time like this, to whet the appetite of young blood for strife, and recall the fervor of the old. Gallant gentlemen all! I present to you a worthy son of the noble House of Hastings, to whose conduct and bravery I owe my safety here, and who has seized the opportunity of our entertainment to encounter the vanguard of the rebels."

While Digby continued in this strain, I was cordially greeted by the Cavalier whom I have previously mentioned; the owner of the steed Satanic that had carried me so well in my late encounter.

"Such has been the hurry of events," said he, "that I have not yet introduced myself to you or claimed the honor of kindred; my name is Harry Hastings, more commonly known, I fear, as Harry Hotspur, and though I have had the fortune to command my Lord Hastings' troop of horse in that scurvy Scotch business, I was prevented from becoming acquainted with his son by your absence during my only visit at Beaumanoir."

It was indeed my fearless and much-feared cousin, who has since held out his castle of Ashby de la Zouche for years, kept the Roundheads in check throughout three counties, and well won for himself the title of Lord Loughborough.

I cordially accepted his proffered friendship, and thanked him once more for the use of his charger.

"A better never served a hunter's or a soldier's need," said he, "though I say it, who bred and

broke him under mine own hand and eye. And now, my cousin, you must let me cement our new-found friendship by a trifling gift; this horse is indeed too light for my burly person, but he will carry you like a cherubim, and to-morrow you must let him be removed to your stable, if his ill-boding name does not daunt you, which I believe to be no easy matter."

Sir Jacob Astley, who sat next to my young kinsman, declared the name to be a sin and shame; and Wilmot, having eagerly inquired the subject of the worthy old Cavalier's indignation, immediately gave the name the benefit of his unqualified praise; defending its propriety with much profanity and wit.

"If thou show thyself," said Sir Jacob, "as bold against the enemies of the King as against the enemy of mankind, it will be well for our cause. I pray heaven thou hast not as good an understanding with them!"

Sir Marmaduke Langdale stopped the conversation at this dangerous juncture, by proposing to pledge my health, and immediately all individual conversation was lost in the confused roar of general conviviality.

The hilarity, however, was soon interrupted by a trooper, whose appearance showed that he had ridden in hot haste, and the poor fellow's gauntleted hand shook, as he presented a small note to Lord Digby. The latter filled his own beaker to the brim, and handed it to the messenger, who eagerly quaffed its red contents.

"Gentlemen," said Lord Digby, with a congratulatory air, "I should regret to break up this good company, were it not that these tidings are of such interest. The crop-eared knaves of Coventry have not only refused the King admittance into their smoky town, but have fired on his Majesty's train, and, I fear me, have slain some. My Lord Wilmot, you and all your troops will prepare to mount instantly and set forward to the King's assistance. We may expect to see you return in a day or two as the escort of his Majesty."

Wilmot and his officers sprang from their seats with alacrity. With no small outlay of round oaths, down came armor and arms clanging from the walls, and a few hasty salutations being exchanged, some twenty Cavaliers left the room, and the rest dispersed themselves more slowly. Soon afterward we heard trumpets far and near, and just as I was sinking to rest, I caught the tramp of horse, the sound of which mingled with and shaped my dreams.

Notwithstanding the excitement of such novel scenes, I slept soundly, and was only awakened by the stir of the crowded town. I sprang to my feet with the consciousness of having much to learn and to perform, and as I hastily made what Digby would have called my toilet, my attention was more occupied with the little details of life that were passing in the street. Here a long wagon of hay was urged toward the cavalry stables; there, a wagon load of pike-handles was trundling up to the stores, superintended by Sir Jacob Astley, who was already on foot and ready to scrutinize them; huge butts of ale were to be seen dragged along by willing soldiers toward their quarters; and armorer's apprentices, laden with back and breast pieces, potts and taces, were constantly hurrying by. Booths full of London wares, and, in many cases, with London warehousemen as well, were fitted

up, lining the whole street; and rustics, whose ordinary markets were in distant villages, now thronged the good city of Nottingham with fowls and eggs, and other farm-yard products, for which they received (or were promised) three-fold prices.

Before I was dressed, I heard the sonorous voice of Harry Hastings calling lustily for his morning draught, and swearing at the oak table, for being the hardest board he had ever slept upon. To this necessity had he been compelled at last by the repletion of the house, and by his disinclination "to presume on our brief acquaintance," as he said, by faking my miserable straw-stuffed bed from under me; all the other rooms in the house were well barricaded before the orgies of the preceding night had well begun. Such a state of things had made the whole household wakeful, and Dame Deerly herself was already stirring and arranged in her best attire.

From her we learnt that in the course of the night, "some great foreign Prince had arrived; and on finding the King was absent, had taken horse, almost without taking breath, and spurred away like mad on the road to Coventry; some say it is Prince Rupert Palatine, and some that it is the Soldan himself come to fight for our religion and rightful Majesty."

Anxious for surer intelligence, I issued forth from the Antlers to seek Lord Digby, whom I found in the midst of business at the castle.

"Welcome, my Paladin," he cried, pushing from him a heap of papers, and stretching his limbs, wearily, "I hope you have slept better than has been my lot. Scarcely was I in bed when a dispatch arrives from the King, ordering petards to be forwarded forthwith to Coventry; and when Will Legge and I had, at length, got a couple of 'potticaries' mortars to serve for the purpose, I lay down again. I was soon roused, however, by the news that that blundering Prince Rupert was arrived, and was storming for information about the King. I got his highness a fresh horse and guide, and sent him forward like a tennis-ball. Then comes a trumpet from Essex, apologizing for an affront offered yester-even to a Cavalier, by a vidette, which it appears had been sent to look out for the return of your Puritan's embassy; and one of the present objects of this second mission is to take back the associates of friend Hezekiah, whom Hyde ordered, forsooth, to be honorably lodged at the Antlers; they now fear that in reprisal for their rascally attack on you, we shall detain this *canaille*, of whom we shall have only too good a riddance. By Pluto, a governor of a royal castle in these times had need of as many heads as Cerberus in order to understand, and as many hands as Briareus, to sign all these papers: not a base peasant of them all will trust the King with a sack of corn, unless he has a promissory note under my hand to pay for it."

This day passed slowly away; it was the eve of that appointed for the setting up of the standard, and though no person expected that appointment would be kept, a sort of feverish suspense almost universally prevailed. In the afternoon; however, my brother Hugo arrived at the head of as goodly a troop of horse as ever armed for the King. I had thenceforth sufficient occupation all the remainder of the evening in providing for their wants, to prevent my time from passing slowly. I had also much to learn from

my brother, brief as had been his stay after my departure. He told me he had left my father so much recovered that he rode with his troop some miles, and in bidding them farewell had spoken of leading them before long in person. He told me also that he had been at the castle to take leave of Zillah and Phebe; that the former gave him rather the impression of Deborah, when she warned the Israelites against battle, but that her sister was all tenderness, anxiety, and devotion.

"Fancy that light-hearted, laughing girl," he said, "giving me sage counsel with tearful eyes, and in a voice so earnest, it might have penetrated a tougher heart than mine. Amongst other matters that surprised me, she told me to beware, and to warn you, of that most accomplished and clever person whom she met under your escort. She also told me she had seen your page Bryan in long conference with Zillah, who appeared sadder and more stern than ever after your last interview. Poor Phebe! her prospects are dismal enough, for one like her; prisoned in that gloomy castle, which has assumed a decidedly puritanic taste since the Parliament waxed so strong. It was a hard task to leave her. From the moment, however, that I mounted and rode away from our valley, I felt lighter at heart than I have done for many, many months, and I almost hope that in the stir of our future life I shall be able to forget the past."

It was very touching to hear the mournful accents of this boy-soldier as he spoke of his past life—pure and innocent though it had been. Indeed he might have stood for the picture of one of the angel warriors in the old Christian stories, as he lent pensively on his sword, his long auburn hair curling down his cuirass, and his tearful blue eyes fixed steadily on heaven, as if there lay his only hope.

CHAPTER XII.

The field all iron cast a gleaming brown,
Nor wanted clouds of foot; nor, on each horn
Cuirassiers, all in steel for standing fight.

Such and so glorious was their chivalry.
MILTON.

I PASS over the raising of the standard, and the consequent events that are fresh in every recollection, and not easy to be obliterated. Never seemed a nation more reluctant than was England to go to war; but when once thoroughly uproused, her efforts were prodigious. An army gathered round the King, as if by magic, and when we marched away from Shrewsbury upon London (as we fondly hoped), we mustered upward of ten thousand fighting men, besides a crowd of mere idlers, courtiers, and officials. I also pass over the various incidents of our march, and arrive at once at my first battle-field.

On the morning of the 23d of October, we found ourselves descending the steep side of, Edgehill to form in the plain below, where the enemy stood ready to receive us. Hugo rode that day in Lord Bernard Stuart's Life-Guards, which I had hoped would have remained in attendance on the King; but when our battle-line was forming, the life-guards requested and obtained permission to charge with Rupert's corps

of cavalry, to which my troop also was attached. I was not, however, destined to command it on that fatal day.

It was a soft, beautiful Sabbath morning that rose over the hills and meadows of the peaceful looking Vale of Redhorse. The church bells were pealing from the belfry of Keinton, and the sound passed solemnly over our wide-spread hosts, as they mustered for the work of slaughter. I then experienced no elation at the prospect of the approaching battle; all the high hopes and enthusiasm I had felt and cherished concerning my first fight suddenly gave way before the solemn and saddening realities of that hour. There is something in the sight of a real enemy almost unintelligible to a young, and innocent, and inexperienced mind. Men, by thousands, speaking the same language, and, in many instances, thinking the same thoughts, were there, some half-mile away, carefully calculating how they could best destroy and crush us. Yet these men might have been good and kindly neighbors to us, as to each other, but for the one great cause; the hand and voice that was soon to deal death against his fellow countryman would have offered to him kindly greetings a few months before.

If such thoughts would force their way even into my boyish mind, how heavily they must have weighed on the soul of our King. And, truly, as we defied before him to the fatal plain below, never did I see an expression of such deep and settled sorrow on the countenance of any man; a heavy gloom had fallen on it, which nothing but the brightness of his eyes relieved.

There was ample time to observe him, for our whole force had but two paths to descend by from the brow of the hill, and these two met in one, near where his Majesty was standing. Our column was obliged to halt just there, in order to allow the artillery to pass by, and I observed all that related to the King with the deepest interest. His thoughtful but penetrating glance seemed to scan every spot of ground and him who occupied it, whether friend or foe; and sometimes that glance would wander for a moment to the far hill-side, where the two young princes stood gazing on the scene full of such moment to their future. He scarcely looked at the different officers who came to announce information, or to require it, but he started at the sound of a deep and somewhat agitated voice, that uttered "God save your Majesty!"

The speaker's countenance was concealed by a helmet, of which the visor was only raised as he turned to the King. I listened, however, with emotion to the voice, and felt my heart stir within me as the King extended his hand frankly and cordially, and exclaimed:

"Lord Hastings, I hail it as a good omen for this day, that you return to my side. Nay, man, speak not of the cause that made you absent; I remember it at this hour, perhaps too well, especially when I see yonder traitor, Holland, in the ranks of mine enemies. Enough for the present, my true-hearted and gallant Hastings! if it shall please Heaven that we both survive this day, hasten to me when it is over. Now tell those troopers to move on, or the rebels will have the triumph of the first move, and there is my nephew Rupert, impatiently waving his sword below for the troops to advance."

As the King spoke the pathway had become clear. My father was instantly at my side, and

an unsuppressed shout of welcome and triumph burst from his faithful followers. As we pressed on to our position on the right, I had time for very few words of greeting; but my father informed me that he had traveled all night to overtake the army. He had suffered so much from anxiety at home, that he determined to follow us. That though still not strong, he hoped to see that one brave battle which must decide the fate of England, as he then vainly thought.

Such was not the will of Providence. But the hour of the fight was come; and so busily had I been occupied with our men, that I had scarcely time to glance along our line, before the battle-smoke concealed it from my eyes. I could only observe that our force was ordered precisely in the same manner as that of our enemies; the cavalry on either wing, flanked by Aston's and Heydon's artillery, and the infantry in the center, where the stout and true Earl of Lindsay fought among his Lincoln volunteers.

I heard a few guns upon the left, then Prince Rupert rushed to the front of our column, and shouted to the trumpeters to sound a charge.

Out they spoke cheerily, and all my enthusiasm blazed up again fiercely from the ashes where it had smoldered. God! what a mystery hast thou made us! A few minutes before, at the tone of the gentle church bells, I felt as if I could have pressed every foeman to my heart, and entreated him to change his evil ways; now, at the sound of the scornful trumpets, and the glitter of the sword, my mood was changed. I thought I could have swept the enemy from the earth even as the Destroying Angel of the Assyrians: I longed to gather their pikes in armfuls, like the Switzer's Arnold, and defy death and suffering alike, as our Cavaliers dashed over my body through the human gap that I had made.

Seldom has a thought been sooner followed by a deed. With one wild, fierce shout, we dashed our spurs into our horses' flanks, and as we burst upon the enemy, the force of our own shock cast us asunder; the Roundhead cavalry never waited for a stroke, nor received one, until they were overtaken in their desperate flight; but the infantry stood firm, as Prince Rupert's column rushed past them like a whirlwind. We on the left, meanwhile, were borne against Stapleton's infantry, who received us with steady hearts and leveled pikes. Still shouting "for God and for the King," I plunged among them, and as the weight of my gallant horse bore me through, I could feel the scratch of a dozen pikes that glanced along my armor; the next moment, I was flung upon the ground, and a rush of men passing over me deprived me of all consciousness.

I know not how long I lay in that sudden swoon, but as I slowly recovered, I could still faintly hear the shouts and yells of desperate fight approaching and retiring, and the ground shaken under me, as masses of cavalry charged to and fro. Gradually the sounds grew more distinct, and vision returned to my eyes; I looked round, and—Heaven!—what a cruel spectacle revealed itself! The hand that I pressed on the ground to raise myself, splashed in red blood, which dyed my cuirass with many a stain. Dead and mangled horses lay on either side of me, round them lay many slain and wounded men; the latter, with low moans and stifled prayers or execrations, endeavoring to writhen their gashed limbs into some

less painful attitude. Most of them were enemies, but all thought of enmity seemed to have passed away. Not a few of these poor fellows had belonged to my own devoted troop, who had sealed their fidelity with their lives, in endeavoring to support my charge. It was miserable to me to see those honest manly features, so well known in childhood's happier days, now distorted or pale, as the sword or musket had destroyed them: I not only knew every yeoman who lay there, but every child and village girl, that vainly expected the return to his home of their slain soldier. A young trumpeter, whose first attempts to sound a horn I well remembered in our woodland chase, lay close to me, empaied by a Round-head pike; and across his breast lay his father, his gray hairs dabbled in the blood that streamed from the boy's side. He was a sturdy forester who taught me woodcraft long ago; his right hand still grasped the sword with which he had severed the arm that smote his son, but a small mark upon his manly forehead showed where the bullet had freed the childless father from all sorrow.

Many such groups lay scattered widely round, formed by death and agony into terrible picturesqueness. Not one mere mercenary soldier could I see; all were honest, simple-looking countrymen, who wore their soldier garments awkwardly, as they lay there, manuring their native soil with rich red blood. As my dizzy eyes wandered over, the dead and dying and slowly recognized each altered face, they were arrested by the prostrate form of an officer, whose crimson scarf showed him to be a Cavalier. I dragged myself toward where he lay upon his face, bathed in gore. I lifted him gently, raised his vizor, and beheld—my father!

He was not dead; but my joy on finding him alive was soon checked, when I observed that indescribable pallor, which even to the inexperienced eye is the sure sign of approaching death. Once more, however, he smiled—smiled upon me with a look of tenderest affection, and his warm heart rallied its energies again as it spoke in his kindling eye and voice. He faintly and solemnly blessed me; and through the roar of war's infernal din, his whispered words fell distinctly on my ear like the accents of an angel.

"Mourn not," he said softly, "no one ever so rejoiced to live as I to die—to die thus on my son's brave breast, while my King's enemies are scattered before him. Now I have no earthly fear to mingle with my hope of heaven! Long may you live, my son, loyally, righteously—and when you die, may you welcome death as I do now."

He paused, and some inarticulate words rattled in his throat; but his last heart's pulse lent vigor to his voice, as he saw some of our troopers returning from the chase; they flung themselves from their horses, and gazed with clasped hands and mournful eye upon their lord. He tried to raise himself, and pointing with his trembling hand to where the battle was still struggling, he exclaimed:

"The standard is taken! To the rescue—to the rescue! This day or never—fight—" Then, after a moment's pause, he rose with a dying effort from my arms and strove to utter his last war-cry.

"For God—" he cried, and his voice failed, his head sunk upon his cuirass, as he murmured, "and for the King." And then he ceased to breathe.

I felt the force of his last words, and the agony of my heart sought refuge in desperate action. I flung a fallen standard over the gallant dead, and forgetful of all bodily pain and wounds, I sprang to my feet. My horse, fearless and well-trained, had never left me. Though rolled over and trampled on, and bleeding from a dozen wounds, he was quietly grazing on a patch of grass, from which he had pawed away the dead body of a little drummer-boy.

I remember nothing more of that fearful day, except charging across the plain, strewn as it was with parties confusedly attacking and flying. I felt my strength failing me, and I only sought to reach the first *mêlée*, to fling myself among the enemy, and perish in the clash of swords. I tried to collect myself—to take in the position of the battle, and lead my scanty troops where they were most needed, but in vain; my brain reeled, and it was only by a glimmering instinct that I led—still at a furious gallop—my willing men against the first body of orange scarfs that I could reach. My troops cheered bravely as we dashed in among the enemy, and I can remember no more.

CHAPTER XIII.

Fain would I go to chafe his paly lips
With twenty thousand kisses, and to drain
Upon his face an ocean of salt tears,
To tell my love unto his dumb deaf trunk,
And with my finger feel his hand unfeeling.

SHAKESPEARE.

Mas invidia he de vos, conde.
I rather envy thee thy doom,
Than mourn for thee, or pity thee;
For such an honorable death
Is glory's immortality.

LOPE DE SENA.

WHEN I returned to consciousness, I found myself lying on a bed of leaves, over which a soldier's cloak had been carefully arranged. I was in a tent, and through the foldings of the canvas door I could see the stars, with freezing brightness, shining down upon the battle-plain below.

A few watch-fires marked the ground where the videttes of both armies now occupied the position which the line of battle had held during the day. Here and there, on the hill-side, burnt a few other scanty fires. The tent I lay in stood upon the summit of Edgehill, and from vague, lazy noises I heard around me, I guessed that the camp was there also. As my eyes became accustomed to the light, I observed a glimmering in the darkness opposite my bed, and there I soon recognized the dead body of my father, armed from head to heel, as he had fallen, but carefully disposed on a crimson cloak. His hands were crossed in warrior-fashion upon his breast, and his countenance—so sweetly grave—seemed to say that his spirit had parted from his last battle into happy rest.

I had dragged my maimed and bruised body near to his, and was kneeling by his side, when the canvas door was darkened, and then Hugo was kneeling by my side. How we prayed I cannot, *what* we prayed, I will not tell; but from that time forth we mourned for him that was gone no more. As sorrow, and disappointment, and despair fell upon us and on the cause he loved, we could think with pleasure and gratitude how

mercifully he had been spared from the evil days to come.

Henceforth Hugo and I were alone in the world; we parted no more; we shared the same bed and board; fought in the same battle when it came, charged side by side, and held the same watch when the fight was done.

The day after the battle of Edgehill I was carried on a litter to Banbury, and thence in a few days to Oxford, where I recovered so rapidly as to take part in the King's advance on London in November. During my illness, I was watchfully and tenderly cared for by Bryan, who gave me by degrees his own account of the battle in which I had suffered so much, yet of which I knew so little.

"Well, my lord," said he, "you remember you ordered me to stay on the outskirts of the battle with the spare horse. I was scarcely set, when the trumpets screeched, and your honor and the rest went at the enemy at such a rate, that the sight left my eyes; whether it was the beating of my heart that pushed out the tears, or the dust that blinded me, I cannot tell. But I soon saw clear enough, and there was the Prince cutting away like mad, well in front of all the troops, that seemed to be running a race after him; and then I saw my Lord that was (rest his soul) leading on the second line, and seeing there was nothing more to do in front, he turned to the left against the rebel foot, and the next minute your honor was in amongst their pikes, and down: and poor old Blount, who was close to you, thinking fit to follow you always, went down on top of you, and the rebels closed over all like waves of the sea, and for a little while the rest of the troop was turned aside. But then my Lord came up, riding quite steady and easy like, and rode in among them as if they were a field of wheat: and the rest followed, and there was great struggling for a little while, till Master Hugo came back from the chase with the gentleman-troop of my Lord Bernard and drove away the rebels like chaff, and followed them too, for he knew nothing of your honor's fall. Meanwhile, the King's Horse on the left cleared their part of the field; and I thought the business was done, when I saw the middle of the rebels pushing on with their foot till they drove ours in, and took the royal standard: it was a long time before they were beaten back, and the King got his flag into his own hands again. And then there was such confusion that I couldn't tell what was happening, or who was beating, or who was winning; and it's my own belief that our General and my Lord Essex knew as little as I did; but at last both sides began to look for their own people, and got together as fast as they could; to talk about the great victory, and to settle how they could most conveniently get away from those that they had conquered so entirely."

"But," said I, "what were you doing all this time?"

"Oh! I forgot to tell your honor that just as I was going down to you, that rollicking, swearing gentleman that gave you the devil (here he crossed himself)—Satan I mean—came up to me all bloody and out of breath, and bid me give him your horse; and when I wouldn't, he pitched me off him as if I was a sack, and the next minute he was on him, and away like a madman, looking for somebody to fight with. In the mean time, a bullet slipped into the left calf

of my leg, and laid me on the green grass, so that I had nothing to do but look about me, and wonder how your honor was getting on among the rebels. By dint of the purse of gold my Lord Pedlar gave me, I persuaded the doctor's men to take me to where I saw your honor fall, but you were gone; and though I found Sam Willis, and Bill Everard, and many more of our boys from home there, the only one that had any life worth mentioning left was old Blount, who had a sore whack upon the head and a broken leg, so that he couldn't stand, and was cleaning one of your honor's pistols to amuse himself. He told me that Master Hugo had carried you off, and promised to send back for himself; and now he's hard by and doing well, only that he's in great trouble about the key of your honor's trunk, that the camp women picked his pocket of when he was in a swoon; for those she-devils follow as close on the soldiers in the fight as the gleaners after the harvesters."

This confused narration was, after all, one of the best accounts I ever heard of this memorable battle; from my brother Hugo to the King, every one had a different version of it. Digby swore that Prince Rupert lost the battle, and Mr. Hyde was ready enough to show how it might have been won, and Sir Philip Warwick swore it *was* won. All I know is, that nothing—not even defeat—could have been more disastrous to England than this undecided battle. I verily believe that the Parliament, if then victorious, would have been forced by the country to give the King better terms, than now, after all their defeats they are disposed to offer. Our men fought only too well, and forgot the better part of valor—that discretion and presence of mind which alone can dignify and turn it to a successful issue.

Six months passed by in various triumphs and defeat. The King had knighted Hugo on the field of Keinton for rescuing the royal standard from the Roundheads. His Majesty had also consoled with us kindly on Lord Hastings's death, and had borne honorable testimony to his merit and his virtues; but my dead father's service was naturally soon forgotten in the crowd of living claimants for court favor.

My brother and I were generally with Prince Rupert, whose restless spirit of enterprise, all-daring courage, and quenchless love of adventure kept us in constant occupation, which was well suited to our circumstances, if not always to our feelings.

Blount now recovered from his wounds; and looking more grim than ever from a deep scar upon his cheek, was still constant in his attendance, while Bryan hovered round me with pertinacious zeal to do me service. My black horse, too, had survived our various dangers, and was still unrivaled in the chase as well as in the ranks.

The summer of 1643 closed in with a stormy autumn, that ended the campaign sooner than usual. Mutually worn out, but mutually unforgiving, the two great parties that divided England were now fain to retire to their winter-quarters, the Roundheads concentrated in and about London, we for the most part at Oxford or at York.

CHAPTER XIV.

Triumph and art ride sparkling in her eyes,
Mistrusting what they look on—and her wit
Values itself so highly, that to her
All matter else seems weak. She cannot love,
Nor take no shape nor prospect of affection.
She is so self-endear'd.

SHAKESPEARE.

OXFORD then presented scenes of great brilliance and attractions. Every one knows the soft and solemn beauty of the city itself, and the rich variety of the country round it, in time of peace. Now, however, that Mars and Bellona had taken up their residence in the quarters of Minerva, the ancient University assumed a new aspect. The colleges were, for the most part, barracks or hospitals, and every little lodging-house was tenanted by rich or noble personages. The presence of the court, its centrality for receiving information, its charming society, varied by every rank, and class, and profession, added to its comparative safety—all these rendered Oxford the most popular residence in England, especially for those who were accustomed to reside erewhile in London. Here, however, all the elements of metropolitan dissipation were concentrated in so small a space, that their attractions and influence were dangerously increased. My brother Hugo, formed to be a favorite with every one who could appreciate genius, grace, and gallantry, was gradually won from his sorrowful seclusion. Indeed, there were eyes and voices then gleaming and sounding about our warlike court that might have won a hermit from his "sainted solitude;" and even I, although possessed by a love almost religious for Zillah, could at least appreciate the danger, that others, not so fortified, must undergo. The brilliant Duchess of Richmond, and the romantic, learned and beautiful sister of Sir Charles Lucas, were considered as the reigning powers in the Court of Love; but they had many formidable rivals.

Our fiery chief, Rupert, was accustomed to scoff at all such sentiments as women could inspire; and of a truth, I believe he never knew the voice that could enthral him for a moment when the trumpet sounded; or of an assignation that would not have been joyfully exchanged for a chance of meeting with an enemy. Nevertheless, this Prince of Cavaliers was not entirely free from the general contagion; and if the Duchess of Richmond's wishes were not law for him, they came nearer to it than any other authority on earth.

One morning I had been making a reconnaissance round the walls of Oxford with the Prince. We daily expected the approach of Lord Essex, who we knew had determined strictly to invest the city; our gay company accordingly, and chiefly the ladies, were making the most of their brief time of freedom, by traversing the neighborhood in all directions with hawk and hound. More than one such party we had already passed without notice, for while on military duty, Rupert had no eyes or ears for aught else. As our round of examination was accomplished, however, and we were about to reënter the town, we caught sight of a group passing along by the river, and among them was conspicuous the snow-white palfrey of the Duchess. The footmen who explored the game with small black spaniels, had just flushed a heron, and a hawk soared gallantly away from the gracefully raised arm of her Grace.

Just then, with as quick an eye as that of her favorite bird, she perceived the Prince, and beckoned to him with a winning imperiousness, which even he was fain to obey; he grumbled, however, as he turned his horse's head, and told me that he would not tax my patience to attend him farther.

"Nay, Sir," I replied, "your Highness is never wont to dismiss me in times of trial, and if I may judge from appearances, yonder party is more formidable than a column of Hazlerigg's lobsters."

"So it is—so it is!" exclaimed the Prince, "with the women alone, one can manage to cope, but they are so infested with the womanish court wittings, that they remind me of Gustavus Adolphus's cavalry mixed up with musketry; while engaging with one in fair fight, the other torments our life out. There, by St. George! is that fair and false French coxcomb, Digby, telling the Duchess some grinning story about me no doubt—but no—he seems to point to you."

Just then the hawk towered bravely, and by a sudden swoop, seemed to fling himself and the heron in one fluttering mass upon the ground. The Duchess and her party went off at a gallop, and the Prince, with an oath of eagerness or anger, dashed after them. We came up as the falcon, re-hooded, was placed upon his lady's wrist, still ruffling his feathers in the pride of victory.

"When will you heroes rest thus tranquilly contented, after your triumphs," said the Duchess with a sort of sigh, as she held up the brave bird toward the Prince.

"There is but one who can claim your Grace's hand as his reward," interposed Lord Digby, maliciously, "and he seems perfectly contented."

The Duke was indeed apparently quite satisfied; his hand was on the mane of Mistress Lucas's palfrey, and her whispering voice was breathing some not unwelcome nonsense in his ear, when arrested by the general attention that was at once turned toward them. Digby had succeeded at one stroke in rendering four people uncomfortable, and the Prince especially. He followed up his success, addressing the latter in a deferential air.

"Your Highness set us an admirable example of discipline just now, and lost me a heavy wager by obeying so promptly a signal of recall."

Rupert's countenance was darkened into an expression that was not pleasant to behold, as he retorted:

"If I had set an example of anything wise or worthy, your Lordship would have been as slow to notice as to follow it."

Digby's arrowy retorts had always Parthian activity, even in retreat.

"Your Highness' high nature is ever proposing to yourself what seems impossible to others," he replied with a complimentary bow and a curl of the lip.

"Come, Prince," said the Duchess, interposing, "and let me present to you a member of your garrison, who, if she prove as formidable to the public as to private peace, may prove a very Helen to our Troy." So saying, she drew over to her the rein of a lady's horse, and gracefully throwing off the veil of its rider, discovered, to my surprise, the lovely, blushing face of Phoebe Demiroy.

I scarcely recognized my young playmate at

first, so much had six months altered the character of her countenance: her eyes had acquired more brilliancy and power, and were more darkly shaded; the wavy, uncertain contour of her mouth and chin had given way to a sculptured firmness; her figure had become finely developed, and her ringing voice had assumed a rich and mellow intonation.

The Prince's stern but handsome features involuntarily confessed the pleasure that he felt as he doffed his plumed hat and bowed to his charger's mane in honor of the introduction. After a few formal phrases, however, he turned to the Duchess, and resigned Phoebe to my eager greetings and inquiries.

"Why and how I came hither is easily answered," said she. "For the first, my heart and yearnings ever followed the fortunes of the King, and it may be, some others who uphold his sacred cause. My father's anxiety to be well with all parties assisted my own wishes, by transferring me to the care of my kinswoman, the Duchess. As to *how* I was transferred; I came last night with the treaters of peace from Reading, and I believe, my presence is the only result of all their labors and discussions with the Round-head chief. As to *where*, she is in her glory, in the very midst of rebels at the grim old castle of Nottingham with our most austere kinsman, Hutchinson, and his tiresome wife. She is now coming to Reading, however, to give her company to my father. But there's a beckon for me, so I must say good bye. Come and see me at Merton College; you will find me over the porter's lodge, where I have usurped some banished student's rooms. I always 'sport my oak,' so you must knock three times slowly. Lady d'Aubigny *hangs out* (I believe our fellow gownsmen call it), in the same apartment, and dislikes as much as I do being disturbed by those Court creatures."

So saying Phoebe cantered forward to pursue the Duchess and her sport, and left me to myself. I instantly sought out Hugo: I knew too well where to find him; in the very apartments that his first love had pointed out.

Kate, Lady d'Aubigny, had been widowed by the battle of Edgehill of one of the noblest gentlemen that ever drew a sword for loyalty: gentle, and generous, and brave, he possessed other qualities far more rare in our camp—a fearless morality and modesty that were proof against all the witty scorners and all the temptations of the Court.

"I thank God," said he, one day, in reply to one of Wilnot's scoffs, "I *can* undergo the martyrdom of a blush."

So could his beautiful and witty wife (now widow) for that matter, when it suited her own purpose; as now when my name was announced, and I apologized for withdrawing her unconscious young admirer on the plea of duty.

"Well, go!" said she to Hugo, "and if, for the future, we must meet more seldom, it will be no regret to you that you have shared and soothed the widow's sorrow, while you still fight manfully for the good cause which now alone has interest for her upon earth."

So saying, the lady extended one fair hand to my brother, while with the other she dashed away an ostentatious tear, intended at least as much for the living as for the dead. Hugo hesitated; he was innocent and warm-hearted, and

for him a woman's tear had the power of a whole stream of Lethe. He gave me an imploring look, as if asking me to leave him for a little while; but something like anger suffused his countenance when he met, instead of sympathy, a sarcastic smile. He was under a momentary spell, which most men can understand; but it gave way before a stronger one as I whispered: "I have news from the castle for you."

He hastily let go the hand he had still clasped, and followed me promptly in the court-yard below.

"Hugo," said I, "your intimacy with yon syren must cease, and I might regret it for her sake, as you do, if I believed that tear were sincere."

"Yes, yes," he replied, "I know that I can seldom see her now. Some cousin of the Duchess is coming to stay in the same rooms with Kate—with Lady d'Aubigny I mean; but how can you be so unjust as to think she is false in her seeming?"

"I will answer your last question first," said I; "I know, I thank heaven, little of woman-kind, save one, the tried and faithful friend of my childhood and my youth; she whom our dead father loved, and whose docile heart our mother taught to know its higher destinies. Hugo! before you and I were left alone in the world—this wild and warring world which yonder trumpet may even now signal us to leave—we were friends as well as brothers. God knows, my brother, that all the sorrow we have shared since then could scarcely add to the love I ever bore you; and now, when somewhat of my father's sense of duty is blended with that love, think you I would give you pain without a cause? I tell you, I know little of woman's wiles, or of such as Lady d'Aubigny; but mere instinct teaches me that the feeling which struggles to display, instead of to conceal itself, is little likely to be true. You ask me what object she can seek in winning your interest? Why, a mere worldly woman's object: you are young, handsome, and already famous, where fame to her is precious; she would fain wear you like some new and brilliant ornament attached to her chateleine, to exhibit and flaunt in the eye of her rivals—that is to say, of all other womankind. I say not this on mere suspicion: I would not wound your feelings at a venture; but I know that she is at least more intimate with Lord Hawley and Lord Newburgh than with you: nay, I have seen her letters on Rupert's table, lying side by side with a dozen other communications to the careless prince. I know that she would excuse all this by her political intrigues with which it is her vanity to intermeddle, but her loves have been too various to be discreet. Now pardon me this long exordium to one little word with which I might have spared it, if I did not wish to take from your coming pleasure any bitterness that misplaced regret for another might have mingled with it. The lady who is to share Lady d'Aubigny's apartments is—Phoebe."

The various emotions that had blended in Hugo's countenance whilst I was speaking, at once resolved themselves into a burning glow of mingled shame and pleasure as I mentioned this last word. He hung his head and pressed my arm as his sole reply.

CHAPTER XV.

One drop of blood drawn from thy country's bosom,
Should grieve thee more than streams of foreign gore,
SHAKESPEARE.

NOW was there time for more. Whilst I had been speaking, Prince Rupert's trumpets sounded out the well-known call to "boot and saddle," and as usual in such cases, we hastened to the great quadrangle in Christchurch. A single trumpet call was the appointed signal to summon officers, only, to the young General's quarters; a second noticed the regiment of cavalry first for duty to prepare for service; and a third commanded the whole force to turn out as soon as they could gird on sword and saddle. These arrangements were necessary in the then critical state of the garrison, when the enemy hovered all round us, and the troopers and their horses were dispersed into various nooks and corners in the overcrowded streets. We were therefore accustomed to listen anxiously for a second sound: and now, scarcely had the first died away among the cloistral echoes, when another followed, brave and strong; and then a third. Between each sound there was silence—the deep silence of suspense throughout the city; but the opening blast of the third had scarcely pealed, when in all directions arose a confused hum and the tramp of armed men. Starting up from weary pallet, or carousing can and flagon, and not a few from hospital wards, the hardy troopers swarmed out into the streets, and disappeared again into the stables and sheds in which their hard-worked horses rested for the while.

Meanwhile, we entered the quadrangle of Christchurch, where already many officers were assembled, and Rupert, his face beaming with stern pleasure, was communicating to each his orders in a loud and eager voice.

"And now, gentlemen," he concluded, addressing all, "I have only to remind you that we have not only the cuckoldy Roundheads to beat, but the Cavaliers of the West to give a lesson to. They thought they could take Cirencester by their own swords, and they failed; now it's for us to do it, while they keep the ground." (Lord Hertford, with the army of the West, had lately been beaten back from this important town.) "Now, gentlemen, let every one look to his men, that they be better equipped than the last time, and, if possible, that they be sober. Warn them strictly against their two besetting sins, want of caution, and love of plunder.—What, sirs?" he continued, looking sternly round him, as he perceived that many of his hearers smiled at his injunction: "What sirs, think you I jest? By the soul of the King, I will hang the first man, be he lord, or groom, or man-at-arms, that lays hand upon aught but his sword, or the enemy, until I give him leave to plunder."

"Or set him the example," muttered Wilmot almost aloud.

"As to caution," the Prince continued, still speaking rapidly, "I may not always set my men as good an example in this respect as you do, my Lord Wilmot; nor do I consider ours to be a time or a mode of war that allows men of honor to spare their men, much less themselves, when an enemy can be reached, and charged home; but our present business must be a surprise rather than, what we all prefer, an open fight. Let the

men have no powder in their bandoleers, but let plenty be at hand.

"See you to this, Will Legge. My Lord Grandison, you will march away, first to Woodstock, and warn Northampton to have his regiment ready by the time we come. You, my Lord Wentworth, will march next, and for this time forbear reminding your men that the Roundheads are 'their brethren.' Sacremet! if you must do so, talk to them of Cain and Abel: think of your father, my Lord. You, Wilmot, of course, will command the main body; if I hear your men grumble, I shall lay it at your door."

And so the hasty Prince went on; assigning to every man his post, in language, which if not always complimentary or agreeable, was at least terse and easily understood. Whatever he said, none cared to reply, for his fierce vehement will prevailed over even the proud volunteers who served under his command; and during the whole period of the war, he was unchallenged, although every one knew he would never shelter himself behind his rank.

In half an hour the royal horse were paraded, and riding forth in all the pride of martial power, through crowds of spectators, among whom were not a few of the first and fairest of England's daughters. We made a skillful feint to attack Sudely Castle, which drew forth the Cirencester garrison from their strong defenses; then quickly turning upon them, we not only beat them back, but entered pell mell with them into their long defended town. There, there were some terrible scenes for half an hour; and then suddenly, as when a tropical storm has passed by, all seemed calm and quiet as before—except the hospitals!

On the following day we reentered Oxford, in what was to me sad triumph, leading with us long files of our fellow-countrymen as prisoners. The whole Court came to the gates to welcome us, and the King, gratified by the first victory he had gained for a long time, was also there.

It was a strange sight, and one to make even a young man thoughtful, to behold England's sovereign gazing on the melancholy array of wounded and dejected subjects as they passed under his review. Many of them, sustained by a high spirit, however misplaced, bore themselves with the air of martyrs in a noble cause; and there was one especially, a tall, brave youth, whom our soldiers had shamefully stripped of his upper garment, and exhibited thereby a form of noble symmetry, gashed with several deep wounds, which obliged him to be carried on horseback. As he passed by the King, the ladies, and nobles of the Court, he held himself upright with an effort, the agony of which was only visible in the clammy sweat that burst from his pale forehead.

"Dog of a rebel!" exclaimed an old woman in the crowd, when she saw him demean himself with such brave insolence.

The young Puritan turned upon her a look of lofty and unutterable scorn, and fell dead! * A dozen eager servants hastily removed the offending corpse, but its late possessor had triumphed: the incident had spoiled the scene; the King retired, and the remainder of the procession had no spectator belonging to the Court.

* A fact, also related by Lord Clarendon.

I will not dwell longer on the minor details of this mournful war. All that my imagination had pictured of grandeur and proud pleasure in a military career gave way before the sad and stern reality of experience.

Nevertheless war, whatever it be, has its dangerously bright illusions. It is always a stirring spectacle to see a brave army drawn out for battle, and nothing in our life can equal the glow and glorious sense of power as we charged thundering over the trembling ground to the fierce music of the trumpets, in chorus with the wild hurrah of our dauntless soldiers. But when the living wall of our foe is reached, and borne down and crushed beneath horses' hoofs; when its living fragments resolve themselves into individual men, shrieking for quarter in our own household language; when we dare not show the pity we feel, or restrain the maddened trooper's rage against his enemy; then the soul sickens, and we curse the grim mockery that rejoices in such a scene, and dares to call it triumph.

Thus I was musing as I rode toward Oxford, when Lord Falkland joined company with me, and remarked that my aspect was not in keeping with the occasion; "especially," added he, cordially and kindly, "as you distinguished yourself not only in valor, but in clemency—by far the rarer virtue now-a-days."

"To you," I replied, "both seem so natural, that I take the more friendly your observing any attempt on my part to imitate you."

"As to what they call courage," said Falkland, "I have no pretensions to rival my mastiff in that quality; and as to clemency, to say the truth, I am ashamed to set the life of others against such a stake as that of my own. Whilst in actual strife, I endeavor to believe that it is my duty—as minister at war, you know—" (and here he smiled,) "to smite and spare not," to use a Puritanism. But often, afterward, I find myself haunted by what I have done; I can then still my accusing conscience only by reflecting that I have helped to remove some sufferers from evil days to come; and that I myself would be grateful to the sword that should so open for me a way to peace—the only peace that is to be found!"

I was touched by these sad words, and by the confidential tone in which a person so highly considered as Lord Falkland addressed me; I was struck too at finding such a coincidence with my own reflections in the sentiments he expressed. I afterward found, however, that these sentiments were very widely shared, by almost all, indeed, excepting those who made their subsistence by war, and their fortunes by plunder.

But it struck me that mere patriotism, however strong, was not a sufficiently romantic feeling to account for Lord Falkland's proverbial contempt of death. I suspected some more tender cause: I could not help taking a deep interest in his confession, and I ventured to ask whether peace was well assured to those who sought it by a voluntary death?

"And even if it were," I added, "can you wish, unsummoned, to leave your high name and all its responsibilities—your home to desolation, and your wife to misery—for the mere sake of noiseless and unanxious sleep?"

Falkland winced: I had touched him where I intended not. The truth was, (as I afterward

understood,) that like most men of a warmly poetic imagination, he had married the wrong woman, having unconsciously disguised and arrayed her in the rich wardrobe of his own ideas. I know not what was the poor lady's fault; probably there was none, except her husband's unsatisfied and unsatisfiable aspirations. The ideal woman 'of such a mind as his' is a formidable rival to any real woman of mortal mold.

"Name, home, wife!" he exclaimed; "the last comprises all three: as she is, so they are valued. If our modern Eves only knew how they can make or unmake the Eden of man's life, they would not so often listen to the serpent vanities, jealousies, and wayward tempers, that play the devil with us. When woman was appointed a helpmate unto man, there was no fierceness in the lion, no poison in the flower; but when she took the apple and our destiny into her own hands, she seems to have become more changed herself than the world that she plunged in misery."

He paused for a moment, half smiling at his far-fetched accusation, and then added thoughtfully:

"Yet have I seen one such woman as seems qualified to fulfill woman's original sacred mission, to comfort, ennoble, and bless our doomed race.* One, who, gifted with the grace, and beauty, and intellect of an angel, appears to have all the long-suffering, and gentleness, and tenderness, that befits a child of man. One whose bosom would afford a paradise of rest to the weary and wounded spirit that sought refuge and solace from the self-sacrificing generous heart that beat within."

He was silent for a few minutes, and I listened anxiously to the touching, though untunable voice, that conjured up a vision seldom long absent from my own imagination. I was startled by the question with which he resumed his speech.

"By the bye," he said, "you are a Lincolnshire man; you perhaps know a family named Demirov? Ah, I see you do! and now I recollect, I saw you with the fair Phœbe yesterday, in very confidential intercourse. Well! never blush for it, at least not to me. Phœbe is the very damsel to form the love-dream of a young Cavalier, and keep him from all the gross realities that deform so many of our comrades' lives. Right glad am I to find that since she must needs mix in this fold of tainted sheep, there is some one to come between her and that wolf Digby."

I hastened to undeceive my companion, saying: "But you are mistaken, my dear Lord; she you speak of is an old and dear playmate of mine,—we were children together, but nothing more; and as to Lord Digby, I know nothing of him that deserves such an epithet as you apply to him. I have ever found him a kind and warm friend."

"Ay, ay," resumed Falkland, "fair and false, fair and false. I know him better than you do; but though I like him not, I would scorn to disparage him, if it were not necessary for you, young and inexperienced as you are, to be aware of

* Warwick asserts, and Lord Clarendon hints, that our Cavalier here states; Lord Falkland seems to have been as unhappy in private as in public life. From the day of Newbury to that of Waterloo, there have probably been few battles without some selfish Decies.

him. I tell you that Digby fancies himself violently in love with this girl, whom he met in some of his masquerading and mischievous rambles; and more than that, I can tell you that you owe him little for your favor with the King. Not that he wishes any evil to you personally, but he wishes your removal from about the court; and that with a true courtier's vehemence in small things."

"But," I remonstrated, "if Lord Digby had any designs against me, he would scarcely have interested himself in my favor, in the first instance, with the king."

"Ah," replied Falkland, "fortunately for you, you know little yet of courts and courtiers. He could not keep either your arrival at Nottingham, or your father's generous service secret; but he did his best to render both unacceptable, by representing them as bribes from Lord Hastings to be restored to the royal favor. To this you must attribute the King's cold reception of you at your first interview; although when his generous nature prevailed over his prejudices, he endeavored to render justice to your motives."

Astonished as I was by such duplicity on Digby's part, I was too much interested in the former part of Falkland's story to dwell upon what merely related to myself: it seemed to me, moreover, to be the slightest matter in the world to call Lord Digby to account for his conduct; and with this resolution I dismissed the subject from my thoughts, and turned to that in which I felt more interest.

CHAPTER XVI.

Ven muerta, tau escondida.

Come peace, come death! come silently,

And sound no knell, no warning give,

Let the sweet bliss of welcoming thee,

Should rouse my wearied soul to live.

CANCIONERO DE VALENCIA.

"Have you long known the lady of whom you spoke so admirably just now?" I inquired, with some hesitation.

"Unfortunately for me, no," he replied. "It was just before the outbreak of this unhappy war that I first beheld her. In those times I vainly hoped that all our differences might be composed by mutual sacrifices and mutual confidence on the part of the royal and popular advisers. With this view I frequented the society of the latter. It was at one of their meetings that I learned the cruel persecution to which an able and upright minister had been subjected by the Archbishop of Canterbury. The person I speak of had been a brave and devoted officer of the King's. At the luckless siege of Rochelle, he had been wounded and taken prisoner by the French; and there, in his imprisonment, solitude and suffering wrought in him somewhat the same sort of change that Ignatius Loyola had experienced. His life had previously exhibited the thoughtless and sensual character too common amongst our young officers; but when his earthly view became bounded by the narrow and dreary precincts of a prison hospital, his active and inquiring spirit soared away, and sought refuge in the invisible world beyond. Already secretly impressed (though as an enemy to it) by the darkly enthusiastic system of the Puritans, he now exercised his

thoughts upon that system. In a word, he became, like Saul, a convert to the principles he had persecuted. He escaped from prison, made his way to England, and, after some strange adventures which I know not, entered into the Church. His asceticism and his eloquence at first obtained for him considerable license for his non-conforming habits, but his vehement nature soon became altogether impatient of the cold, official forms so sternly insisted on by Laud. He was accordingly cited before the Ecclesiastical Courts; he made some submission or composition, which satisfied the churchmen for the time; and he returned to his poor curacy then the only means of support for himself and an infirm mother. But he became more ardent in his obnoxious views as the flames of dissent were spread abroad throughout England; or else the Church became more exacting. At length, it required of him such concessions as he could not or would not make. Without further process, he was superseded, suddenly, in the midst of winter, flung abroad upon the world, penniless, and what was far worse to him, forbidden to preach, under pain of banishment. His mother died of the hardships attendant on the change, and their ejection at that inclement season; and so it seemed to him, that she was murdered by the Church. He was left alone in the world.

"Such, at least, was the case which I heard stated, and in which I naturally interested myself. Pym, who narrated it, amplified the story, and added a thousand touching incidents, skillfully striking all the sympathies which his marvelous knowledge of human nature enables him to play upon so successfully. I ought to have been more upon my guard against statements coming from such a quarter: but when he ceased to speak, I heard a gentle sigh, and for the first time, I observed that a young girl of exquisite grace and beauty had been a listener as well as I. Her eyes sought mine, as if to see what effect the tale had produced on others. Such eyes! so soul-possessed, so full of a spiritual light, that shone all the brighter through the unconscious tears that filled them. It seemed to me, as if the very angel of pity stood by, to champion with her gentle power the wronged victim whose fate had already powerfully interested me. I always told Hyde that I never was intended by nature for a statesman: as the Persians say, I carry my judgment in my heart and not in my head. Accordingly, I vowed to the Puritans to take their part. I pledged myself that very night, in the House of Parliament, to call the prelates to account, and you know I kept my word. I was rewarded for my impetuous and perhaps rash declaration, by a look of approval from the fair listener, and that look haunts me still. I sought her acquaintance; I found in her a perfect sympathy with every better impulse of my nature, whilst every narrow or sectarian feeling seemed, like bats, to shrink from the clear sunshine of her presence.

"Wrapped in one of those trances of thought that so often blind men to their actual position, I continued my intercourse with the demagogues, as I must now call them, and with my beautiful instructress. With respect to this outlawed churchman, I could not myself offer him an asylum without offense to the King; but the lady I spoke of informed me one day that a place was ready for him at her father's house, and required only my application for it, in order

to account for its bestowal. The affair was arranged, and the churchman, converted by persecution into a better Puritan, became chaplain to a wavering royalist."

During this explanation, I was several times on the point of interrupting Lord Falkland, and returning his confidence in a manner that his words had rendered very painful and difficult. I determined, ultimately, to ask him one question, the purport of which may be easily guessed, and to be guided in my explanations by his reply.

"No! by Heaven, Hastings!" he exclaimed; "she never gave me the slightest encouragement, and if you had known her, you never would have asked the question. She would not know what encouragement meant, indeed—no more than if she were already in that world where there is no marrying or giving in marriage; naught but the most perfect purity could produce that modest fearlessness and engaging confidence that so charmed me. But why I dwell on such a subject, I scarcely know. To me she must ever remain an object of admiration, as unapproachable if as radiant as a star. Ah! wearily life flows on in absence of all hope for ourselves or others on this side the tomb. Eternal war, and strife, and struggle, within and without; in our country, in our court, in ourselves! The destiny of man seems like that of the lesser creatures, who are only born to devour and to be devoured. Peace! Peace! Where could that blessed word have originated, save in Eden or the poet's imagination? Peace! Peace! her presence is not to be sought in palaces, or the cushioned halls of luxury, or even within cloistered walls;—the grave—the grave alone is her asylum!"

I had listened, in silent astonishment, to this long confession from one usually so restrained and cautious as Lord Falkland; and I could only account for his unexpected confidence, by believing that his sensitive nature, once having burst the bounds of its usual reserve, overflowed in despite of himself. For my part, I felt such embarrassment, that I endeavored only by silence to show my sympathy with the speaker.

Since then, this gifted and eccentric man has found the rest he sought, and, I trust, the peace he longed for; England is still writhing under the sufferings he bewailed; and she whom he associated with the cause of his despair is still as great a mystery as ever.

As our conversation ceased, we entered the gates of Oxford, and then followed various military duties, and the usual contest for quarters, provisions for men, and assistance for our wounded. It was therefore late before I had an opportunity of seeking Hugo, who had been prevented from joining our expedition by his attendance on the King.

My disappointment was great when I found that he had been dispatched to Stratford-upon-Avon, to make arrangements for the reception and supplies of a large detachment of Royal Horse, about to march northward in a few days. As I was changing my dress, I found that a wound, which I had scarcely noticed, began to feel painful. On being examined, it proved rather serious, and kept me confined to my bed for some days. In that busy time, when a man was out of sight, he was soon forgotten or supposed to be absent, and Blount strictly fulfilled the surgeon's injunctions to keep me quiet, by excluding every visitor. The first who obtained, or perhaps sought

for, admittance to me was Prince Rupert. He saluted me with rough kindness, and told me I was quite well, or must be so by the morrow.

"I march to-morrow for the North," said he, "and I would not be so ungrateful as to leave you here, consuming in idle safety. We shall move at first by easy stages, for to say truth, I shall have half a hospital on horseback; trusting to air and exercise to put them in fighting trim before we reach Birmingham. Your brother Hugo and Dallison are gone on to prepare for us, and, in short, you see you must be well, and send your surgeon to the right about. You lose nothing in leaving this fiddling and chattering town just now, for the women have all got the chicken pox, or the gaol fever, or some such matter, and are become invisible. My surgeons are busier in attending fine ladies than good soldiers."

I followed the Prince's advice; I called for meat and wine, declaring myself well, and almost drove Blount into a state of mutiny by going out to walk. The next morning I was in the saddle betimes, with many another Cavalier as ill or worse than I was, and we marched away for the North. Thus I was again compelled to leave Oxford without again seeing Phoebe.

Bryan, now considerably grown in stature and importance, rode by my side; supporting me when I felt faint, cheering me when I was most depressed, and amusing me with an inexhaustible supply of private anecdotes that he had picked up amongst his gossips at the Court. As the Prince prophesied, I rapidly recovered on the road. When we reached Birmingham, I was still so weak as to be only a spectator of its capture; but at Lichfield I was able to serve once more, which I did the better, as I had my gallant cousin Hotspur for a comrade. After the siege and recovery of this good town, our flying army was recalled to Oxford by pressing dispatches from the King. We left Lathom House and York unrelieved, therefore; and returned, reluctantly, to our old quarters at the University.

The very evening of our arrival, my brother and I went to visit Phoebe; Hugo proved the change that a year had wrought in his youthful sensations by a nervousness till then unknown to him. We found her in the apartment she had mentioned, in Merton College. When we entered, she was sitting in a window's deep recess, and Lady d'Aubigny sat, or rather lay, upon a cushion at her feet. They formed a picturesque group, strongly defined by the light of lamps within, and a bright moon without, each making strong shadows, as their pale and red rays gleamed over cheeks, and hair, and gracefully draped forms.

Lady d'Aubigny welcomed my brother with a languid smile of triumph as if reclaiming a lost truant; but suddenly her countenance changed, and her eyes flashed fire, as Hugo passed her with a deep but distant salutation, while he grasped Phoebe's proffered hand with timid eagerness; he seemed to have forgotten that Lady d'Aubigny was in the world. The latter soon recovered herself, and entered eagerly into conversation with me; asking various questions relating to our late campaign, which showed that she was well informed concerning its operations.

Meanwhile Hugo had lost all thought of everybody and everything in the presence of his beautiful Phoebe. She seemed to me to have improved in the dangerous art of coquetry, and to be amused

rather than touched by his romantic admiration. Just then Lord Digby entered the room, and without ceremony took all the conversation in it on himself.

I was not in a mood to appreciate his gift at that moment, but I was compelled to admire the inimitable dexterity and brilliance of his discourse. Without the least approach to dogmatism or patronizing airs, he seemed to exercise some undefined species of authority and winning influence over his hearers; one by one admitting each into partnership with his best thoughts and happiest conceits; so that, instead of a rival, he made each listener self-interested in the prosperity of his jest. For Lady d'Aubigny he had some tale of a political intrigue, whose dramatis personæ were made to amuse all the company, while its purport was confidentially dropped into her private ear. To Hugo he told, in most touching terms, the sad story of the gallant young Fielding's unhappy failure and his doom. Even for me, on whose brow he saw a cloud lowering, he endeavored to frame a palatable eulogy for the late affair at Lichfield; but finding me ungraciously disposed, he turned haughtily away and addressed himself to Phœbe. Then I became more deeply interested, and argued ill from the very fact of his postponing his address to her as to the least doubtful hearer in the room.

What a change took place in his manner as he approached her! Instead of the bold and almost exulting confidence with which he had tempered his communication to others, he at once assumed an air of timid and deferential yet most honest seeming, in addressing her. The scoff and the jest were laid aside as weapons that he had no longer use for, and a frank simplicity took their place. I could not help cursing him in my heart, as Phœbe turned her beautiful eyes toward him, beaming with too much of the confidence he so dangerously sought. In a few minutes the once frank-hearted girl and her insidious admirer were engaged and absorbed in deep, low conversation, while Hugo—the generous, the noble, and the true, stood alone and neglected in the center of the room. He seemed to feel some annoyance, but nothing more; so entire and trusting was his faith in the playfellow of his childhood, that suspicion, or its grim avenger, jealousy, never occurred to his mind. He remained, however, restless and embarrassed, as if waiting for the end.

Meanwhile the Lady d'Aubigny watched the whole scene with eager and delighted eyes; and when, at length, her gaze met Hugo's glance, she riveted it by a look—full of fatal meaning—toward the recess. There leaned Phœbe, with eyes averted indeed from the eloquent Digby, but listening and glistening, and brighter for the reflection of the raised color of her cheek. Digby seemed to hover over her; the points of his lace collar sometimes actually touched her sleeve, and she trembled slightly, but moved not from where she stood. At length my eyes ventured to meet Hugo's: his cheek, a short time before, wore the warm hue of sanguine youth and purest health, while his high forehead was of marble whiteness. Now that forehead was dark with its first flush of shame and ire, and his cheeks were ashy pale.

He almost rudely flung away the hand of Lady d'Aubigny that rested on his sleeve, and strode toward the door. I followed him; I told him at once what I feared he felt, but added that I knew

Lord Digby had some confidence with Phœbe, who had nevertheless warned us against him.

"So you see," I added, "this scene,—which I grant you seemed strange, is a mere matter of business. However, you will perhaps like to be by yourself, and I must return; for I, too, have some business with this Lord."

With a struggle between hope and sadness, Hugo grasped my hand and passed out; I returned to Lady d'Aubigny's apartment.

Phœbe had left the window and was looking pensive; Digby was conversing gayly with the widow. I drew near the former, and observed to her in a low voice that I presumed she had found a warning she once gave me was unnecessary in her own case.

"Oh!" she exclaimed, with glistening eyes, "you cannot conceive how I have, wronged him. I now know him to be generous and true-hearted, as formerly I believed him to be false."

I looked at her steadily, and the blood mounted to her delicate cheek.

"Lady," said I, "I know that to return your warning against this bold, bad man will be as vain as it is necessary; I can only deplore the blindness of one whom I have known so long and regarded so tenderly."

Digby, whose quick ear nothing escaped, now finished some jest to Lady d'Aubigny, and joined us with the remark: "Our affairs must be even as deplorable as Falkland would represent them, if this redoubtable Cavalier finds aught to deplore in such a presence."

"I was deploring falsehood and treachery," I replied, "which unfortunately may force their way into the presence, if not into the favor, of purity itself."

"Too true," returned Digby, with mock sentiment, "even as the Father of lies obtained admission into truthful Eden. But dare I inquire to what your aphorism refers? Or perhaps?"—he added, in a lower voice—"I had better postpone the inquiry to a future opportunity."

After a few commonplace remarks, in which no trace whatever of disturbance appeared in his voice or countenance, Lord Digby took his leave, and I almost immediately followed him. Phœbe seemed rather uneasy than alarmed, and Lady d'Aubigny was too much occupied with her own thoughts to take much notice of others.

CHAPTER XVII.

Or gli animosi a ritrovar si vanno,
Con senno i passi dispensando, ed arte
Ecco si vede incominciar l'assalto,
Sonar il ferro, or girar basso, or alto.

Era a parar, più ch' a ferire, intento,
E non sapea egli stesso il suo desir.
Spegnor Rinaldo saria mal contento;
Nè vorria volentieri egli morire.

ARIOSO.

"WELL! my Lord," exclaimed Digby, as we met in the court-yard below, "there is need of few words between us:—I accept the challenge which your manner gave just now, and I should spare you the trouble of further words upon the subject, but that I would fain know to what I am to refer the honor of crossing swords with so distinguished a personage?"

Strange to say, I was rather at a loss to reply

to this very natural question. I had indignation enough to quarrel with a host of Digbys, but a formal reason for doing so was not so easy to assign. My sole impulse had been to take the quarrel out of Hugo's hand. He, at least, had no valid reason to assign for what I well knew was inevitable. I had suffered the more palpable injury of treachery, but I had not known how far Lord Falkland had spoken under an implied confidence.

At length I replied: "Permit me, too, to ask you one question, to which your reply will furnish an answer to your own. When I had the honor of escorting your Lordship to Nottingham, did your report concerning me to the King agree with the professions you were pleased to make to me on that occasion?"

"Enough," said Digby, coloring slightly, notwithstanding his self-possession; "enough,—you have lent an ear to the usual calumnies against me, and that is sufficient to make me the challenger."

"For that, at least, I have to thank you," I replied hastily. "The King may excuse in your Lordship's case—what would doubtless incapacitate me from ever having the honor of serving him, as my father proved in the case of a former favorite."

Lord Digby was silent for a moment—perhaps the remembrance of his having informed me of this fact—perhaps some impulse of generous feeling influenced him. When he spoke again, it was without any remains of his former haughty manner.

"I know not how it is," said he, "or what busy devil perverts all my intentions. I know that I intended to have deserved and, if possible, to have gained your friendship, but some other pressing matter prevented me from immediately taking the best steps to secure that end. However, that matters not now. No man shall ever say that George Digby shrank from a challenge, or permitted an insult to pass unavenged. You have but to name the time and place."

"This moment, if it please you," said I, anxious to prevent Hugo from having time to meet with my antagonist.

"Nay, nay," said Digby, carelessly, "you are too good a swordsman for me to meet, without first settling my affairs; and I have lived too long and busily not to have many such affairs to settle. This evening, if you will, I shall attend you at Bagley Wood, at sundown. One word more: the King's orders against the duello are strict; let this appear to be a chance quarrel and encounter, and let us have no third person present."

This matter being arranged, Lord Digby repaired to Christchurch to amuse the King, and to plot new schemes for the mere sake of plotting. I hastened to Prince Rupert; for I remembered well how my father suffered life-long disgrace for such an act as I was now about to commit.

I found his Highness walking up and down his small apartment very rapidly; his hat was flung upon one chair, his scarlet cloak upon another, and his sword lay upon the table which was strewn with papers. His right hand was thrust into the breast of his doublet, and with the left he was gesticulating violently, whilst he dictated to his secretary Bennet what I conceived to be a letter.

"Welcome!" he exclaimed to me, as I entered; then turning to his secretary, he con-

tinued his dictation thus:—"And I openly dare the most valiant and quick-sighted of that false faction to name the time, the person, or the house, where any child or woman lost so much as a hair of their heads by me or any of our soldiers.*—There, Bennet, that will do for the present.—Now, Hastings, what's your business? never mind your apologies; I was only inditing a rejoinder to those black-hearted knaves, the Puritan bravoos of the pen, who have been long striving to assassinate my reputation. I prefer arguing with them at the sword's point; but this paper bullet may reach the white-livered scribes, who never budge beyond their ambuscades at the writing-desk."

In a few words I told him frankly my position, adding, "I dare not officially ask your Highness's leave to fight, but I am sure you will pardon me, when I tell you all the circumstances attending my challenge."

"By St. George," exclaimed the Prince, "I am only sorry that I cannot take your place against that impostor Digby, nor even be your second. No, I must know nothing about the business; but I'll see you safe through its consequences, notwithstanding our royal uncle hath, in his clemency, forbidden all duello,—a thing impossible!"

Encouraged by the Prince's manner, I proceeded boldly to ask him to send Hugo out of the way instantly. His Highness has kind and even gentle feelings concealed beneath his stern manner, as his heart beats warmly under his cold, iron harness: he has a kindly feeling, especially for that fraternal affection, which I did not scruple to confess to him. I told him that Hugo and I were alone in the world; that the love of a household was for me concentrated in that one brother whom I now sought to save. My request was favorably heard for the sake of Prince Maurice; his Highness's only comment on it, however, was a loud call, which was answered by a tall, eagle-eyed Cavalier; a personage of doubtful origin, but unquestionable courage and activity, well known to us all as Rupert's Mercury.

"How fares Captain Dallison to-day?" inquired the Prince of this individual, concerning an officer who had been wounded the day previously, in fighting his way to Oxford with a newly-raised squadron of horse.

"The Captain is pretty well, your Highness," replied the officer; "but for his arm, that's twisted almost out of him; and he's somewhat disturbed by the fever, which taking sack instead of soporifics seems to produce."

"Well," said the Prince, "he is scarcely fit for duty under those circumstances; but his rustic troopers must be tamed by service, for I find they are playing the devil in the town. Go get them into the saddle, and find out Sir Hugo Hastings instantly, to take them toward Reading, whither I have a message for the Lord General. You may tell him it is a service of moment."

The officer disappeared at the last word of the young General's orders: I did not importune his Highness with my thanks, but retired, making a simple acknowledgment of his kindness.

I hastened to my quarters, which consisted of two small dark rooms in High street. They seemed darker than usual. Blount looked dis-

* This very passage may now be read in Prince Rupert's "Declaration," in the British Museum. The Cavalier's memory was true almost to the letter.

mal even to grimness, though I allowed him the indulgence of announcing a long list of casualties consequent on our late forced march. His humor seemed to suit me, and I let him talk on whilst I was changing my dress for one better adapted to the approaching strife. At length I directed him to seek out and accompany my brother Hugo on his expedition, and when freed from his presence, I proceeded to settle some few affairs; on reflection, however, I decided only to write to Zillah. I was anxious that if I fell, my encounter with Digby should appear a casual one to Hugo; and as all that I possessed would naturally revert to him, I had no legal arrangements to execute. My faithful followers, Bryan and old Blount, would, I knew, be well cared for without my directions, so that I had only my private feelings to consult.

I will not say that I had a presentiment that I should fall; but knowing Digby's skill as a swordsman and unscrupulous disposition, I felt that it was not unlikely. It was only the previous week that Sir Frederick Aunion had fallen in a similar affair, which had produced the King's rigorous denunciation of all future duels; therefore, conqueror or conquered, I had as little that was pleasant to look forward to—as a duelist deserves. So I now think. I then prepared for the transaction as I should have done for any other indispensable business or military duty.

Assuming my hawking dress, with my usual rapier as my only weapon, I sallied forth to the place of rendezvous. I left my letter for Zillah concealed, so as to avoid all present observation; it ran thus:—

"Zillah:—I should not presume thus to address you for the first time, if it were not also to be the last. The hand that traces these few lines will be cold in death before they reach you; the voice that ventures to complain will be silenced. How entirely your being influenced and possessed mine, I now feel more than ever;—now, when, at the approach of death, you are the only person on the earth to whom I address one parting word. And even to you I write, not for the sake of the dead but of the living; to spare you future sorrow, and, perhaps, to save others from yet greater grief. In this hope I must inform you of circumstances, which from you of all others, I should have otherwise kept secret.

"Your sister is here, as you are aware; but you are not aware that she is in the most dangerous of all society, where all the vices of a camp are combined with all the fascinations of a court. You have heard of Lord Digby: he has openly professed himself an admirer of your sister's; and admiration, such as his, I need not tell even you, is a scandal, not an honor. In a word, he and my brother met this morning in your sister's presence. Lord Digby then received so marked a preference that Hugo retired in sorrow and despair. I feared the consequences for him, procured his immediate dispatch upon military business, and during his absence became involved in a quarrel with one whom I must now call his rival. As you will only receive this letter in case that quarrel should have a fatal result, I thus write to you without reserve.

"Your own judgment will dictate to you what as best to be done with respect to your sister. If I should fall, Digby will probably have to fly; but the King is more than merciful to those

whom he loves, and doubtless this dangerous courtier will soon be recalled. If your sister remain at Oxford, he will then be more dangerous than ever to her peace, as she will have suffered anxiety and pain on his account. Young and beautiful as she is, she has no adviser or protector here who deserves the name. One word more; I should not presume thus to interfere in such a matter but for the fraternal feeling with which I have always regarded her—the pain that her sorrow would cause to you, and the knowledge that my memory will be secure in your generous keeping from all unworthy imputations.

"Now, Zillah, farewell! With you is associated all that my young life has ever known of happiness and hope. You first taught me to aspire to a life of purity—and to feel the degradation of a mere life of pleasure. Through the bright medium of your mind, I felt how beautiful was the world that seemed unmeaning to other men. In your sweet keeping were concentrated all the stray desires and thoughts of love that ever haunt young hearts for good or ill. Even my resolution wore your form, and if in this most miserable war I have won some honor—the praise be yours;—yours, though gained upon the party you espouse.

"My life, and love, and hope have hung upon you; if my reward has been a disappointed life and early grave, I will not blame you as the cause. Whatever has been your conduct, your motives are still to me unimpeachable, and doubtless worthy of yourself. I will not utter one complaint; reproach would be ungenerous when you can never reply to it. But my hour is come, and I must say, farewell! in the fervent hope and humble trust, to meet you in a world of truth, whence all concealment is forever banished."

* * * *

I only left a message for my brother, and some orders for Bryan, as if I expected to return soon. I was resolved to do so, if alive, and to meet my trial, whatever the penalty might be; and I determined not to take Digby's life under any circumstances.

Sustained by this resolution, and by the indifference to death that long familiarity with danger had taught me, I rode away almost cheerfully to the place of meeting. It was a secluded little meadow, inclosed on three sides by a thicket, on the fourth by a high hedge. As I pushed aside the branches, to force an entrance through the hedge, the scene of action stood revealed, and there I found Digby, thoughtfully leaning on his sword.

On seeing me, he made a grave salutation, and proceeded to loose the points of his cloak with the utmost indifference. When he flung it from him and stood up to his full light, I could not help admiring, not only the symmetry and beauty of his person, but the calm, unostentatious courage that shone steadily in his eyes. No trace of anger, or even of a stern purpose, was there; his better genius seemed to inspire him, and he looked the model of a soldier and a gentleman.

It was on a soft and pleasant evening that we stood there, Digby and I, face to face—to fight, as each believed, till one of us should die. The earth that we trod upon looked bright and hopeful with all the flowers and young grass of spring. The sky that arched us over was calm, and glow-

ing with all heavenly tints. Birds, bold in their happiness, sang over our heads till scared away by the flash of our swords, now drawn at the same moment, and chasing away all thought but that of how to dim their shining! Often have I thought since of the strange contrast between the calm of all without, even to our own features, and the strife within—the invisible anger that urged us on to that most fell and unnatural of all fights, a duel.

Since then, I have learned to perceive the greatness of my crime; but then, I was so unconscious of any guilt, that before I crossed swords with my enemy, I knelt upon one knee, and offered up a brief and humble prayer. Digby made no such sign, but he turned aside, perhaps in courtesy. We then addressed ourselves to our task.

On measuring weapons, Digby's appeared to be half a foot longer than mine. He placed it under his foot, to break off the point; the grass, however, was soft, the steel was strong, and it would not break. I interrupted his further attempt, by saying, that I considered the shortness of my sword as an advantage.

"Be it so!" he said, as he advanced; and the next moment we were engaged.

My antagonist was an accomplished swordsman, and had all the advantages of perfect coolness and consummate courage; but I soon ascertained that he was no match for me, whose chosen exercise and amusement fencing had been from my youth. It was evident to me, however, that Digby was only playing, and was, at all events, anxious to avoid making a fatal point. More than once, his sword scratched my doublet sleeve; but we both warmed in the exciting game, and at last I received and turned his blade so as to wrench it from his hand, and send it high into the air. Notwithstanding his anger at being thus foiled, it was evident that he wished to make my refusal to take advantage of his discomfiture an excuse for putting an end to the quarrel. This would by no means have suited my views; I told him, tauntingly, to take up his sword, and to prove his hand less false than his assertions.

My words wrought a sudden change. I saw a different man before me: his eyes flashing; his teeth set, and his whole frame as if in act to spring upon me. His attack was fierce and well nigh fatal, for whilst I sought for an opportunity to wound his sword-arm, he rushed blindly on and passed his sword into my side, so that I could only have defended myself by running him through the throat: his point merely grazed my flesh, however, and as he drew it out to repeat the thrust, I flung him from me with a strength he little expected. At that moment the branches of the hedge crashed, and a well-mounted horseman plunged through them into the little field where we stood.

"Away, away!" he cried; upon your lives or liberties away! The King has learned your purpose, and a troop of horse is after you. Never was he known so angry; he swears to make an example of you both—if the offender were his own son. He knows of this grave cavalier," he continued, pointing to me; "but for you, my Lord Digby, you are supposed to be unknown, and may escape if you can only reach Oxford by another route; as for you, my gentle cousin, you must be off without delay."

It was Harry Hotspur, who had come, as he thought, to rescue me. I thanked him for his good intentions, but professed my determination to finish the affair I had come upon—adding that I had far more to fear from the royal anger than Lord Digby had.

"Fore George!" exclaimed Hastings, "it were a pity to break off what you seem so earnest of. Lumsden's horse, however, are at hand to arrest you, and I must try to mislead them. If I succeed, I will return incontinently to make my compliments to the survivor."

So saying, he put his horse again at the thick fence, and disappeared as suddenly as he had entered.

And now we recommenced our attack in a different spirit from before: each more cautious of his antagonist, and more resolved to bring the matter to a quick decision. I afforded my enemy what he thought an opportunity to pass within my guard, but as he lounged forward, he found his arm impaled upon my sword. He shrank, and involuntarily quivered for a moment with the pain; then, drawing himself up, he remained motionless, perhaps expecting my next and fatal thrust. When I restored to him his sword, with some cold compliment on the manner in which he had used it, he smiled, and frankly extended to me his unwounded hand.

"I offer you," said he, all that you have left me, in frank and cordial pledge that you shall henceforth find me your true friend; and, lo! here is our Hotspur for my witness."

My cousin reappeared through the hedge, in high glee at having sent our pursuers on the wrong scent, and he was still more pleased with the issue of the fight. To say the truth, though brave, and generous and truthful himself, he was a warm friend of Digby's, and looked upon his faults with a very lenient eye.

With some difficulty we made a sling for the wounded arm and got the sufferer on his horse: then, in defiance of my cousin's advice, we rode deliberately toward Oxford, and found ourselves under arrest as soon as we entered the gates. Digby's wound was severe, and confined him to his bed; this was all that I desired, and I accordingly submitted to my own imprisonment with resignation.

CHAPTER XVIII.

I have a man's mind but a woman's might;
How hard it is for women to keep counsel.

SHAKESPEARE.

One day he came before the king,
And knelt low on his knee—
A boon, a boon, my good uncle,
I crave to ask of thee.

AULD MAITLAND.

By the Prince's favor I was a prisoner in my own apartments, and my first care was to look for my letter to Zillah, and to burn it. It was gone! A white flag to Essex, on occasion of an exchange of prisoners, had afforded an opportunity for sending letters to London, and this was as eagerly seized on by the garrison at Oxford as by mariners at sea who find a homeward-bound ship. Bryan had come to seek for letters, and having, with unlucky ingenuity, discovered that to Zillah, he had dispatched it.

It was mortifying and provoking in the highest degree, nay, grievously absurd, this false announcing of one's own death. But there was no help for it; the privileged messenger had gone out in hot haste, and the outposts of the enemy were at this period within a few miles of Oxford.

As I was meditating on this unpleasant subject, I heard a loud step upon the stair, and without a knock Prince Rupert entered, and greeted me with his usual blunt, manly kindness:

"Well done!" he exclaimed, "well done, I say, and again, well done! You have given Digby a lesson, and what is better, you have put him out of the way for some time to come; so that honest men will have some chance of being listened to. Now up, man, and come to the King; 'fore George, he is in a royal passion, and it is quite a pleasure to see him chafed for once."

"With your Highness's good leave," said I, "his Majesty's anger is by no means a source of amusement to me, and I will beg to postpone the honor you propose to me till to-morrow."

"What ho, there!" cried the Prince, good-humoredly; "you guards, conduct the prisoner to the King."

Two arquebusiers now presented themselves, whom I was fain to follow as directed. The Prince took my arm as we walked along, and talked merrily of the approaching interview. When we entered Christchurch, however, he resigned me to the guards, and preceded me into the Great Hall, where the King was at supper.

I and my guards soon became so mingled with the groups of officers at the lower end of that large apartment, that we remained unnoticed. I could see Prince Rupert, however, and even hear his voice, which was never subdued to a courtly tone, except when addressed to woman's ear.

The King's table, however, was brightened on this occasion by the presence of some ladies, as well as other guests. Lady Isabella Thynne sat on his left hand, and the Duchess of Richmond on his right, and by her Grace's side was a vacant place, which Prince Rupert took, after a formal salutation to the other ladies, and some familiar nods of recognition to their Cavaliers. I watched every circumstance closely, and somewhat anxiously, for it was not unlikely that the future fortunes of my life were then at issue.

The King looked more grave than usual, and his manner seemed to impress all those at table with him, except the Prince, who was in the highest spirits, and talked and laughed loudly. For some time the conversation related, I believe, to a skirmish that had taken place in the morning: then it seemed to me that my case, and presence too, were mentioned, for the King turned a dark and momentary glance to where I stood, and Prince Rupert spoke out, regardless of all impressions but his own.

"'Tis a pity," he exclaimed, "that my Lord Digby could not better observe your Majesty's commands against dueling; for I want officers badly, and this afternoon's little tourney seems likely to cost us the services of two more. One could have thought that there was fighting enough in public, without these private recreations to help it; but 'faith, I believe the passion, like most others, grows upon one by indulgence."

The King made some austere reply, in which he appeared to attribute the blame to me, instead

of to the quarter on which the Prince had laid it; for the latter promptly replied that "Lord Digby, being the senior, and so much in his Majesty's confidence, was at least the more responsible."

"At all events," continued the Prince, "here is Hastings to answer for himself. I took it upon me to bring him into the presence at once; for, sooth to say, with Essex at the gates, I cannot well spare one of my best officers, nor his good troop, which, by the bye, has never received a shilling of pay from the royal treasury. I know not the moment the trumpets may sound 'to horse;' wherefore, I pray you, my honored uncle, dispose of this case at once, and forgive, or banish, or hang this Hastings out of the way incontinently."

Without waiting for a reply, the Prince motioned to my guards to advance, and in a few moments I stood before the King; without any trepidation, certainly, but I hope also without any approach to effrontery. In fact, I had little to hope, and fear has never been my failing. I was sorry for the King's displeasure, but I had not yet learned to deplore the cause of it: I was well content to serve his Majesty as long as his standard stood, but I should not have much regretted a temporary suspension from that privilege.

The King regarded me for a moment with a countenance that was rather mournful than stern, and though my eyes were cast down, I could feel that his glance then wandered almost nervously away. After a few minutes' awkward pause he broke silence thus:

"Lord Hastings, I could well have wished for a more solemn occasion, in which to judge you for the great crime you stand accused of. Nevertheless, as our nephew's zeal for our service hath hastened your trial thus, I will at once put to you the question on which our decision must depend. We are informed that you have this day engaged in the bloodthirsty and most unchristian act of dueling, contrary to our express commands, as well as to the law of God. Are you guilty, or not guilty, of this offense?"

The King was silent, and my self-possession was sorely shaken by the manner in which my accusation had been made; and at the same time my attention was also disturbed by the appearance of a stir at the door, as if some one was endeavoring to force an entrance. The King appeared as if a weight was taken off his mind when he had spoken, and his eyes now rested calmly on mine, waiting my reply.

At length I spoke; I confessed that it was true I had had an encounter with one of his Majesty's officers; but I denied that I had acted in a bloodthirsty—and I trusted, not in an unchristian—spirit in so doing.

The King now rose in his chair, and of course his example was followed by all the company. "Lord Hastings," said his Majesty, "I grieve that you should have placed yourself in a situation to require so indifferent an excuse. I grieve that you should have incurred the punishment, which in justice to the souls, as well as to the bodies of other men, I dare not remit. If you desire it, you shall be tried of this matter by a council of your peers; but this I tell you, that if they find you guilty, you must surely die; yes, for your offense is death, by the Articles of War that we have ourselves promulgated. I would rather, in consideration of your own and of your father's

good service, bid you depart this realm and remain beyond seas for the period of your natural life."

This sentence took me completely by surprise. But while my pride rose against the judgment, my conscience began to suggest that it was not quite unrighteous. I was therefore about to retire in silence, bowing to the royal will, when Prince Rupert stepped hastily forward, and laying his hand kindly upon my shoulder, exclaimed:

"I ask your Majesty's pardon, if for a moment I plead the cause of this good Cavalier. You have pronounced sentence upon him as became a just sovereign, now forgive him like a magnanimous King. If I were a lawyer (which God forbid) I could argue that there be very different species of duello—some, I doubt not, deserving all the hard epithets your wisdom applied to this case in question—but there be others that are mere tourneys to settle points of honor, concerning some fair lady's eyes, or the quality of a retort. You find this brave Lord guilty from his own words, and his own words declare that he had no bloodthirstiness; this, I take it, makes all the difference between the duello, and those passages of arms in which your Majesty's own self once took delight and so much excelled. Again,—where be the witnesses against my Lord here? and where is his opponent? He surely did not fight alone, else would his bloodthirstiness be suicide. Again I say where be the witnesses—without whom no man in England is ordinarily condemned."

The King's mood had gradually been changing during the rapid and energetic utterance of the Prince's friendly speech, and when his Majesty again spoke, it was in a milder tone.

"Our nephew is right; you shall have leave to call any witnesses, be they seconds or other, (though I should rather call them accomplices,) to prove that your object was not a deadly one; and I promise you, moreover, that such witnesses shall have pardon."

"Then here is one," exclaimed a faint but well-known voice, from the group near the door.

And Digby advanced, or rather tottered forward, supported on Bryan's shoulder. He was carelessly, perhaps hastily, dressed; and his sword arm was in a sling; he was very pale from loss of blood and suffering, but his spirit was unsubdued and unchanged. He sank upon one knee as he approached the King.

"First," said he, faintly but firmly; "first, let me claim for myself your Majesty's gracious pardon, as just now promised; and secondly, let me bear witness to this brave Lord, that my life was this day frequently in his power, and that he spared it. For my own part, much as I deprecate your Majesty's displeasure, I am not now able even to pray for forgiveness. My voice fails; but your royal clemency will let my very silence plead somewhat in favor of a devoted subject."

Here Digby's strength entirely failed, and he swooned.

The King seemed moved. He descended from the dais, and taking his courtier's cold hand in his, attempted to chafe it; then resuming his former attitude, he desired the sufferer to be removed with all tenderness, and the royal surgeon sent for to attend him.

As soon as the stir caused by this incident had subsided, the King turned to me.

"Lord Hastings," said he, "you are pardoned;

but it is fit that this day's action should not pass without some notice, in order to make an impression on those in the garrison who might claim your case as a precedent for impunity. Nevertheless, your punishment shall be so slight, that many men might take it for a reward. The Lady d'Aubigny is about to proceed to London, under an escort hence, with a pass from the rebels through their hosts. You shall command that escort, and accompany the lady during the remainder of her journey."

Having thus spoken, the King turned away to the group of ladies who had stood at a decorous distance, and at the same time I left the hall in company with Prince Rupert.

The Prince was in high spirits. "Well," said he, "there's a pretty hour's amusement. How well that dog Digby played his part; 'fore George! I could almost have felt for him myself when he swooned away, only that I observed him wink with one half-closed eye to the Duchess as he fell."

CHAPTER XIX.

Away, away, thou traitor strong!

Out o' my sight thou soon shalt be!

I grantit never a traitor's life,

And now I'll not begin wi' thee.

JOHNIE ARMSTRONG

I MUST now interrupt the narrative of my personal adventures, in order to describe what was passing round me.

It had long transpired that Lady d'Aubigny was about to leave Oxford, and it was whispered that her expedition to London involved in it some object of a political nature. For a mission of this description she appeared to be peculiarly well adapted; she seemed to be fearless as an Amazon; full of resources, of infinite tact, and above all, possessed of a persuasive beauty, to which, it was said, some of the Puritan leaders were by no means insensible. With these advantages, however, were combined an indiscretion of talking, that rendered her a dangerous accomplice to trust to. In skillful hands, no secret in her keeping was safe. I verily believe she would have told how old she was, if she had no other confidence to bestow.

Our state secrets had, somehow or other, an extraordinary power of exuding; and we, mere soldiers, generally learned the King's intentions for the first time through the enemy's public journals. Through this channel it had lately become known to us that Lady d'Aubigny had applied for a pass from Essex to visit London. This pass had been granted, and her Ladyship's advent was welcomed by her enemies as that of a carrier-pigeon by its owners. The Roundheads wanted some new incident to excite the people. They knew well the contents of Lady d'Aubigny's papers, and they calmly expected their arrival.

Lord Essex, as I have before mentioned, beleaguered Oxford, and occupied the country for many a mile round. His declared intention was to invest our City of Refuge with his troops, and gradually to contract the circuit occupied by them until he inclosed the King.

In London, all overtures to peace were considered as having failed, and the Roundhead

Government exerted themselves with incredible energy and success to prosecute the war. But there were several distinct parties among the Puritans, so various in their views and divided in opinion, that there was always some one in communication with the King. If the royal arms prevailed, there were timid men who sought to conciliate the conqueror; if, the Roundheads won a victory, there were those among them who feared too much success for their own party, and sought for a compromise to restrain them. This state of things fed the war, and maintained a constant under-current of intrigue, that alternately damped our energies when successful, and sustained our hopes when we were defeated.

Now, to return to my own story. On descending to the court-yard after my trial, I was noisily welcomed and congratulated by my cousin Hotspur, and many of the wilder cavaliers; while Carnarvon, Southampton, and others, with whom I more associated, also met me with kind greetings. Thus, in a sort of triumph, I proceeded down the High Street to my lodgings; the Prince still leaning on my arm, and giving me instructions for my expedition to London.

Finally, he desired me to mark the rebel quarters well: "As soon as you return," said he, "I shall beat them up, and show Essex that his strategy is no match for the 'Mad Prince,' as his knaves are pleased to call me. And, hark ye, I have settled with the King that your fair Phœbe is to accompany you, or rather Falkland has arranged that she is to accompany Kate d'Aubigny. This is no place for girls of that sort, and we have ascertained that her old double-tongued father is now at Reading, carrying on that business of Waller's, so that she will be at once at home there."

I thanked the Prince warmly for his intelligence and thoughtful arrangements, and was about to take my leave, when he held me by the arm, and said in a graver tone:

"This war, Hastings, is an uncertain game; and what people call danger is often found where it could least be expected. I am sorry to tell you, that your brother Hugo's party was attacked, suffered severely, and left many prisoners behind: your brother is among the number. But, cheer up, my friend, he's scarcely wounded, and I shall soon procure him an exchange if there's a man among them worth his ransom."

Without waiting for an answer, the Prince pressed my hand, wished me God speed, and left me.

This news was indeed a severe blow to me, the more so as I had been instrumental in the measure that led to it. I consoled myself however with the reflection, that my brother was probably more safe as a prisoner than under any other circumstances; especially at the present moment when his wounded spirit would seek every opportunity of danger in order to distract his grief.

On reaching my own apartments, I could scarcely refrain from smiling when I saw old Blount, his doublet rent, his face begrimed with powder, and his left arm tied to his neck, yet still endeavoring to arrange my dress and arms as methodically as if nothing had happened. I had sent him with Hugo's expedition; and from it, after fighting like a tiger, he had been one of the few who had escaped. He told me his story

in a very few words and with an unaltered tone of voice.

"Sir Hugo," he said, "had too much of the man in him and those new raised troopers too little. They were half drunk when we left the town, and rode singing and hollaring like mad, till they were suddenly beset by a few score of Hazlerigg's lobsters. They struck some stout blows too, and Sir Hugo laid about him manful well, till one came behind him and knocked him off his horse. I cut in to help him, but a dozen of the rebels fell on us at once, and carried him off like a sack of wool. I thought it was my business to come back and wait on your honor, and got home as quick as I could, after a little scratching from their long swords, and a scorch from their captain's pistol."

All the time he spoke, the stout old man continued to occupy himself as usual about my harness. When informed that I was to leave Oxford the next morning for London, however, he quickened his movements, and said that he must go to the surgeon, to put him into order for the journey, and stitch up some seams that the Roundheads had made in his old skin. I did not forbid him to accompany me; I knew that denying him would give the faithful old fellow more pain than he could suffer from his wounds: but I afterward explained to him that the pass was made out for me alone, which rendered his attendance impossible.

Before I went away, I felt that I ought to call on Digby and proffer him my thanks for his testimony in my behalf. I could not excuse his falseness, but I began to think that it was constitutional, and scarcely intended by him; and now that Phœbe was about to leave Oxford, his conduct was almost a matter of indifference to me. I found him carelessly stretched on a pallet, in a large room, redolent of the strongest tobacco and the most delicate perfumes; strewn, too, with armor and court-dresses, and pamphlets and papers of all sorts in wonderful confusion; furnishing a not inapt resemblance to the rich but ill-arranged furniture of the owner's mind. He was pale and languid; the crimson scarf that he usually wore in battle as his badge now supported his wounded arm as a sling, lending a strong contrast to his white dress and pallid skin.

He welcomed me with a smile, and spoke of the scene acted in the King's presence, as if it had been some masque in which we had played a part together. When I attempted to thank him for his opportune appearance, he stopped me, and declared that it was Bryan who deserved all the credit of it.

"The queer boy came to me," said he, "just as the surgeons were dressing my wounded arm: in a strangely eloquent but disjointed address, he informed me, that your life, perhaps, was at stake on account of having obliged me, as he was pleased to express it, by going out with me; he alluded in very distinct terms to our journey to Nottingham, and, in short, he bore me off in triumph to the King.—Never thank me for it, however; I could not have done better for my own interest, and it is always pleasant to amuse the minds of the fair witnesses, before whom our trial was conducted."

I have dwelt more at length on these passages with Lord Digby than they would seem to merit, were it not for the important part that he has played in our war, and the place that he will fill

in history. His character was, as it were, the character of many of our party in one; remarkable for a combination of all the peculiarities that were shared among so many others. Since that evening, I have seldom seen him; but I still feel that he is one who being once connected with our destiny is sure to be entangled with it hereafter.

* * * *

The following morning, Lady d'Aubigny, with Phoebe and their serving-women, was ready to start at day-break in the King's coach, which was to convey them as far as Reading, whence they were to proceed on horseback. A crowd of young gallants escorted the ladies as far as the first outpost of the rebels, but were then obliged to return to Oxford. Our passes specified the Lady d'Aubigny and another lady, with their female servants, and one attendant gentleman, whose name was left blank, to be filled up by Prince Rupert. These, having been rigidly examined, we were suffered to pass with cold civility, under an escort that vigilantly forbade any communication except among ourselves. As the spirits of the party seemed to have vanished with the young cavaliers, our journey through the deep and miry roads was wearisome enough.

When we reached Reading, I consigned my fair charges to their well-guarded apartments in the best hostelry the place afforded, and then retired, feeling little inclination to seek society under present circumstances. My first care was to ascertain whether Sir Janus was in the town, and to obtain leave from my guards to seek him. I desired to inform him of one daughter's unexpected arrival; and, need I say, to inquire for another. I met surly answers to most of my inquiries, for my cavalier garb was not a recommendation in Reading.

At length I was stopped in a narrow passage by a group of officers and divines, who seemed to be issuing from some assembly. I addressed my inquiries to one of the former, who immediately referred to a Puritan minister, engaged in dry and stern argument with another. On hearing his name mentioned, the minister turned abruptly round with a cold stare, which instantly gave way to a look of astonishment, evidently of no pleasurable kind. It was Hezekiah Doom.

When some moments of silence had enabled him to rally his well-trained faculties, with a formal return to his greeting he informed me that I should find Sir Janus in the adjoining house, but that unless my business was very urgent, I could not be received there, as the Baronet was severely indisposed.

I hastened to this house, however, with a beating heart; my knocking was unanswered, so I raised the latch, and entered. An anxious voice inquired hastily who was there; and without reply I entered, and found myself in the presence of Zillah!

Yes! she in whom were centered the whole interest of my world was there, though I saw not her face. It was buried in her hands, and her whole frame was quivering with emotion; she seemed in the very agony of sorrow. With a trembling voice I pronounced her name; she started to her feet with a shrill cry, and gazed wildly on me. Her eyes appeared to dart light, as they gleamed out from her pale face and all the rich dark tresses that surrounded it; a gush of tears as quickly followed, and she sank upon

her knees, clasped in her folded hands a letter—and beheld that letter, it was mine!—mine, which I had written as the relation of my death!

With a mingled sense of happiness and shame I clasped those hands, and hurriedly endeavored to explain why that letter had been written, and how it had arrived. As I spoke, Zillah sent one deep inquiring glance into my very soul, and then cast down her eyes, her long lashes glittering with her tears upon her cheeks: they were no longer pale; a deep color rushed into them, and mounted to her very forehead as she slowly drew herself up, and folded her hands in cold dignity across her breast.

After a few minutes of silence, she had composed herself, and even stilled the throbbings of that breast; she spoke slowly and calmly, but not in her usual voice, as she thus denounced all my happiness, and left me all my shame.

"Lord Hastings, I will not deny that I rejoice in finding that you are still among the living, nor will I deny that the weak passion of sorrow you have so strangely witnessed was caused by my apprehension of your death. But it was with no earthly fear or grief that I mourned for you; your having perished in your sin was the thought that wrung my heart. Had I heard that you had died in fight, doing battle for the people of the Lord, no tear would have escaped me; but to think that you, the companion, the trusted friend of my earliest youth, had perished in a heathenish brawl, by the hand of one of your own infidel companions, was sore trial to me. For your care of my poor sister, had it been otherwise shown, I could have thanked you; but to do evil that good might come is too much in consonance with the popish principles and crooked policy of the party whom you serve."

The sweet voice of my reprover must have had wondrous power in softening her stern words; or else the delight I experienced in beholding and hearing her once more overcame all other thoughts. Woman's anger is far less terrible than her sorrow, especially when you can see through the storm the lights of sunshine struggling with the clouds; and so it was with Zillah, as I thought. And then her lofty attitude and noble bearing became her so well, that the words, which were in keeping with both, seemed exactly what she ought to utter.

I replied, therefore, deferentially, as became me: yielding up all argument to her beauty and her power, and leaving the party-question out of sight. I then told her that her sister was arrived, and inquired whether Sir Janus would make application for her restoration to freedom, as she was still kept under restraint, together with Lady d'Aubigny.

Gradually, as I spoke, Zillah's manner became subdued into its more usual tenor, and she exclaimed, forgetful of her late emotion, "My poor sister! my poor sister! she must be rescued by all means. But my father is too ill, or esteems himself to be so, to leave his bed: I must inquire for his chaplain:—would that he were here!"

"He is here," exclaimed the deep voice of Hezekiah, in a tone as if it had burst from him. (I hope I do not wrong him, but I imagine that he dogged my steps since first we met.) "He is here—at hand," he continued, "—as bechooves the shepherd to be, when the wolf is prowling near his fold."

The indignation that I felt on observing the influence that this dark man seemed to exercise over the woman that I loved was intense, but the angry words that rose to my lips paused, struggling, there; the savior of my brother's life rose before me, and my thoughts only spoke in my eyes. The Puritan understood them, however, and replied by a severe and haughty look, that seemed to dare me. Turning then almost scornfully away, he addressed himself to Zillah, who had reassumed the calm, rapt air, that was but too well known to me.

"What hath the daughter of Zion in common with the sons of Belial?" demanded Hezekiah, almost sternly, of his lofty and impassive-looking pupil: "is it seemly that these godly men," pointing to my guards, "should see such as thou conversing at this hour, and thus, with a Malignant and an enemy of thy people?"

The Puritan had evidently been carried away by his feelings beyond the usual boundaries of self-command. It was evident, at all events, that such interference was an unusual assumption on his part, for Zillah gazed on him with a mixture of surprise and proud displeasure. But her nature was too commanding not to be able to command itself—the more so when most stirred.

"Sir," said she, with a calm, quiet air, that was in itself the best reply to Hezekiah's intemperate address; "Sir, there is here no matter for such discourse; I had intended to seek counsel from you concerning my sister, who is treated as a prisoner by our own authorities. This Cav—" she hesitated a moment and corrected herself, "this man of war has been her escort thus far from the camp of the King, and came to inform me of her arrival."

The Puritan replied hastily, that the lady was already cared for; and then, and without further explanation, he passed into the supposed sick room of Sir Janus. Immediately afterward, that anxious father called Zillah, who, with a stately, nun-like formality, but yet something of a kindly glance, bowed to me and disappeared into the same room. My guards then reminded me that I must return, and soon afterward I found myself in my inn.

Lady d'Aubigny's waiting-woman was there, waiting to request me to visit her lady, into whose presence I was straightway ushered.

Handsome as Lady d'Aubigny always was, she never appeared to me so much so as in that evening. The excitement of travel had given light to her eyes and color to her cheek, while fatigue, though unfelt, had subdued and softened her somewhat too vivid beauty. And yet her magnificent hair, which I had always been accustomed to see richly adorned, was closely compressed in curl-papers! A dark vail, however, covered her comely head, and floating back over her shoulders, I suppose did duty to the eye instead of the usual floating tresses.

Lady d'Aubigny never sat upon a chair or bench when she could help it. Lord Carnarvon had easily persuaded her that the attitudes of the East were far more becoming, and she obeyed the suggestions of that traveler and of her own taste. She was now couched upon a carpet, with which she always traveled, in order to keep her delicate feet from the rude floor; and her white dress was relieved off the dark tapestry with which the walls of the chamber were loosely hung.

She received me very graciously; tears trembled in her large bright eyes, and her voice, as well as her look, had assumed that sort of timid appeal that makes so dangerous a variety in proud beauty's powers. Her mind appeared to labor for a fit form of expression, and it was some time before she found words to explain that she feared I had not a very favorable opinion of her.

"Yet," she added softly, "you are one of the few in the world whose opinion I *could* value." She concluded by telling me that all her goods were to be searched,* "for those dangerous papers, which they seem to know too well are in my possession. Now let me place full confidence in you—and confess that my heart is beginning to fail me in this matter. Scarcely had we arrived when a rude man entered the room, and sternly desired poor Phoebe to resume her traveling dress, and to make herself as little like Jezebel as possible, as she would be required to give evidence forthwith before the secret committee in London, touching the matter of Ahab.

"You know, perhaps, that the arch-traitor Pym admires her extravagantly, and that may be one reason why she was hurried off to London. Poor child! she knows nothing of our state secrets; and to confess to you the truth, I would fain be back in Oxford, and yield up that dangerous possession to some other. Whilst I was there, buoyant with hope and daring, which I imbibed from the goodly company with which I was surrounded, I thought I could have dared and done anything. But here, in silence and solitude, surrounded by these grim and insolent Roundheads, I feel that I have undertaken more than I had heart for. My soul sickens when I think of the terrible ordeal to be passed through in London when the plot explodes. Waller, too, has failed in his promise to meet me here; and the secret that I bear seems better known to every one around me than to me. Oh! surely, when careering through the battle-field, with banner, and trumpet, and loud guns, you have far less need of nerve than now, where we are mysterious conspirators standing on a mine, round which an enemy scatters sparks, while they seek to throw light upon it."

"Lady," I replied, "I am no conspirator. I have no knowledge whatever of the scheme in which you have so boldly risked your fair person. I am not one of those who seek to contend in the cause of truth with the weapons of falsehood. I would fain leave such courses to Jesuits and Puritans. Even the honor of being your escort was no choice of mine; that privilege was forced upon me. However, now that your anxiety is only for your safety, I am bound, as a gentleman and a soldier, to defend you with my life."

"I will not thank you," said Lady d'Aubigny, "as if I could have doubted of your faith. I will only beseech you to tell me how to act. They may search my wardrobe as they will, they cannot find the papers they seek for. Can we, as if resentful of the injury of being searched, claim safe conduct back to Oxford? I see that the strength of our plot is already gone, though now it lies, like Sampson's, in my hair."

* We find that the French Ambassadors to the King were, about this time, as rudely searched as the Cavalier describes Lady d'Aubigny to have been.—*White-lock*, p. 72.

Suddenly the tapestry was violently shaken, and Hezekiah Dool appeared from beneath its folds, exclaiming :

"Delilah that thou art! thy plot of fear is vain as that of thy false bravery. As a lion lurking in secret places, have I discovered thy dangerous subtlety."

The minister had not yet recovered from the excitement he had lately yielded to—he advanced almost fiercely toward Lady d'Aubigny to clutch the papers that he had discovered. I stepped forward instinctively to her assistance; but with a strength that I could not have believed possible, he flung me aside, and before I could recover myself he had seized the papers. The next moment he lay prostrate and bleeding on the floor; I felled him with my clinched hand, and at the same time Harrison rushed into the room, followed by half a score of men-at-arms. It took less time than I can tell it in, to drag me down stairs, to bind me hand and foot, and to cast me into a dark cell in the castle-dungeon. Lady d'Aubigny was deprived of the papers which cost so many brave men their lives and fortunes, and which made Waller, the conductor of the plot, as infamous for his meanness as he had been once glorious for his poetry.

CHAPTER XX.

To-morrow! oh that's sudden—
Spare him! spare him!

THE BIRTHLE TRAGEDY.

I LAY in a strange state of reckless discomfort in my cell, yet time did not seem to pass slowly. The novelty of my situation struck me more than its unlightfulness or its danger. Even then, a chained,—and probably—death-sentenced prisoner as I was, I felt pleasure in the thought that I was near Zillah, and in the conviction that if I was to die, I should see her before I passed away. In that thought I fell asleep and dreamed happily, until some wounds I had received from Harrison's eager myrmidons, and still more, the intolerable pain of the cords with which I had been bound, vengefully tight, awakened me. Then came fever-fits alternately with fainting, and when my prison door at length opened, I was scarcely able to recognize the persons who entered.

There were two, but only one step sounded on the damp stone floor, so light was the other's tread. Immediately, my cords were cut, and the blood began to circulate in my veins once more. I opened my eyes and found the light of day, streaming into my dungeon, fell upon the two forms I loved and hated most on earth. Zillah was closely wrapped in a cloak, and her eyes filled with that pity which her other features strove sternly to repress.

Hezekiah rose from his labor at my cords, with a visage as unmoved as that of a statue. He cast a cold, keen, inquiring glance upon Zillah's countenance, and then drew back as far as the narrow space of the dungeon would permit. But Zillah seemed unconscious of his presence—of everything. Unable to rise, I could scarcely see her face, but I believe it was upturned in prayer, for the hood of her cloak fell off, and discovered her head of matchless symmetry, from which

the long, dark hair rolled down in rich confusion. The silence was intense: emotion lent energy to my tortured and weakened frame, or rather—torment and weakness were both forgotten, as by some secret sympathy I rose slowly on one knee, and my mind too strove to assume the attitude of prayer. I felt that I was to die; and far worse, I felt that this was to be my last interview with her with whom my life was twined. At length Zillah turned her eyes on me—those wondrous eyes, so full of immortal light and truth!—and then she spoke, in pained, and faint, but firm tones:

"They tell me that thou, soldier as thou art—friend of mine as once thou wert—have been detected in the base and cowardly office of a spy. Nay more, that our godly soldiers, who witnessed thy interview with me, arrested thee unto this prison in a vulgar brawl about a—paramour! But I come to reproach thee with no earthly feeling. They tell me there is but one fate reserved for a spy. They tell me—thou must—die." I could only see, not hear this little word trembling on my poor love's pale lips. For a few gasps of breath she paused, and then continued more hurriedly, "I sought and obtained one favor, to see you once more; and if possible, once more to waken in you the pure thoughts of our happy childhood, and prepare you for the higher comfort that some godly minister may, through grace, be permitted to impart.—Oh! do not interrupt me, or the few minutes that remain to us—to me I mean will be lost. Oh! Reginald! on this dread moment may hang all the hopes of a happy eternity—Forget! blot out from your soul the evil and profligate experiences of the camp, that have so dishonored your once noble nature. Remember the day when we sat hand in hand, gazing on the sunlit sea, and beholding God visible in everything that was beautiful. Remember the time when the death of heroes seemed to us so glorious, and a shameful death impossible."

She paused, and shuddered. I thought she shuddered at my crime; but no,—for with a piercing cry she fell upon my neck, and bathed my brow, my very soul, with such delicious tears, that I could scarcely bear up against the too exquisite delight. My arms still hung without sensation by my side, yet I could rapturously feel the poor heart that I so adored as it beat against my bosom in its frantic grief. Yet—who will believe it?—by some irrepressible impulse, even at that moment I raised my eyes to where Hezekiah stood, or had stood, for another form seemed to occupy his place: dilated, quivering in every limb, his lurid eyes blazing up into fierce fire; and yet there was over all such an expression of unutterable woe, that, rapt as I was in the greatest happiness I had ever known, I still could pity him. All this passed with the rapidity of thought, for, with a groan of pain, rather than an exclamation, the Puritan laid a heavy hand on Zillah's shoulder.

"Woman! woman!" he shouted, yet between his teeth, "must thy miserable sex ever fail? Wilt thou ever give up Eden for this accursed fruit? Wilt thou, like Lot's wife, look back from blessedness to gaze on that which is doomed to swift destruction?"

The preacher might have gone on, but he was unheeded. Zillah—the high-souled, proud Zillah—had fainted on the breast of her despised

lover; the life-strings, strained so long, seemed snapped. My cuirass was a cold pillow for that delicate cheek, but I could not help her, for my limbs were still powerless. The preacher probably believed that she was dead, for his voice ceased, and his countenance changed into rigid solemnity. He then raised her form gently from its forbidden resting-place, and his hands actually pressed against me while he did so. I sank helplessly on the ground, and Hezekiah bore away Zillah to the window in his arms. I could see the breeze, as it stole through the iron bars, stirring the ringlets on her pale brow; or was it that dark man's breath? Suddenly my veins seemed free; I sprang to my feet; the blood rushed to my brain, and I sank senseless on the ground.

When, through pain and agony, my spirit once more struggled into consciousness, I found myself in a well-ordered room, attended by a severe-looking but gentle-handed surgeon. I was sternly desired to be still; I was informed that in the fray of the tapestried chamber I had received some wounds in my head that might prove dangerous, and that nothing but profound quiet could preserve me.

"One word only," I asked, "how long have I been senseless?"

"Three days," was the reply. When I next attempted to speak, the surgeon left the room, and I have reason to suppose that his silence was meant for kindness. I could bear suspense no longer, however, and taking advantage of his absence, I dressed hastily as well as I was able, and left the room. There I found two halberdiers, who quietly took me by either arm, and led me—not back to my sick room, but forward to the cell which I had left.

I lay at the far end of a dark gallery. During my brief passage thither I inquired for Zillah, though I almost shrank from naming her.

My guards made no reply; I entered my cell, and the door closing in upon me, I felt as if I were already in the land where all things are forgotten.

Soon afterward my door was gently opened, and the elder halberdier, who had been my guard, looked in.

"Man of Belial, as thou art," said he softly, "and though I be ordered to have no speech with thee, nevertheless my heart is troubled for thee, and I will speak. Poor youth, thou art like unto my son, even my first born, whom you servants of the tyrant and the idolater slew in Keinton fight; and surely thou too shalt die, but not like him, in the goodly heat of righteous battle:—without friend to back, or foe to front, thou shalt be shot to death, dog-like. And for that, inasmuch as thou art a blood-seeking cavalier, I rejoice; but, inasmuch as thou art formed in God's image, and art like my son, I would not that such another goodly form were destroyed, or thy voice were put to silence in the grave even as his was. Speak then, and for his sake I will answer thee, that thy soul may not be all dark."

It seemed hard that I should be thus ever visited with the offenses of others; but I was too anxious to feel aught except gratitude toward the rough but kindly soldier. I besought him to tell me what had become of Zillah, and when my fate was to be decided.

"For the woman," replied my guard, "she was somewhat ill, as I heard say, in mind or body,

or in both, mayhap; and the man of two minds, her father, carried her off speedily unto London, whither he is called to answer for this villainous plot against the Chosen of Israel. As to thee, I hear tell thou art to be removed to Lewknor, whence the Lord General lies; and that, there, after court of war duly held, thou wilt be shot to death, as I have already told thee, for a spy and conspirator against the Parliament."

Just then a trumpet sounded in the courtyard below, and my guard exclaimed, in tones less dry and nasal than he had hitherto used: "These, I doubt not, be the men who are to lead thee away. Bethink thee, poor youth, (if thou hast ever heard aught save the blasphemies of the Cavaliers,) of some goodly matter that may profit thee in another world, for well I wot thy course in this is nearly ended."

So saying, he gently closed the door, and resumed his beat with ostentatious vigilance along the gallery.

I had not long to muse on the dismal fate that was before me; never to see Zillah more, and to pour out my blood with all the ignominy of a traitor. I heard a low but well known whistle under my window, to which I replied by thrusting one hand through the bars, beckoning, as well as I was able, to my invisible friend. The next moment the window was darkened; Bryan had sprung up with wonderful agility, and was clinging like a bat against the bars. He was disguised as a beggar, and his face presented apparently a mass of hideous sores.

"Oh, Master, dear," he whispered eagerly, "my heart is broken for you, and the Lady gone away, and no one to save! And I have only a minute to tell your honor everything. When you wouldn't let me go with you among the rebels, I followed you on foot, and as I had no pass, I was obliged to change coats with a beggar's brat, and to spoil my face to save losing you, and being hanged to boot. For I knew danger was coming to you, and I made sure of finding the Lady, and of saving you. But that enemy of mankind, Hezekiah, has had his will of everybody; and he found out the plot, as they call it;—and when the Lady insisted to see you, he wouldn't let her, until she spoke out and put fear into him, and then,—when she came to you, the villain got up some other devilment; what it was, I know not, but in an hour after old Sir Janus was off to London as quick as he could travel, and the Lady in a litter behind him. And the murdering general would have shot you clean out of hand, only that you were ill and they obliged to set out for Lewknor, where they say an attack is expected, and so you are to be taken and tried there.—There they come, and I must be off, if I'd have any chance of ever seeing you alive again. Good by, good by, master dear; we'll meet at Lewknor, anyhow, if not in life, in death."

So saying, the boy dropped from the window, and disappeared, just as the guards entered my dungeon.

As I afterward learned, he begged and whined his way through Reading, until he reached the outskirts of the town. There a picket of horse was posted; their horses fastened to a tree, the troopers lying on the turf. Bryan begged charity from them, maintaining his disguise. In return for a crust of bread, he plucked some grass and offered it to one of the horses, notwithstanding

the forbidding of the horseman, who was too lazy however to prevent him. Gradually the boy loosed the bridle of the farthest charger, and as he was about to vault upon him, he whipped out a sharp dagger and cut the reins of the other three horses. Then, springing into the saddle, he galloped off; the enraged troopers fired after him too hastily to hit him, and their pursuit was vain; their horses were running wild about the fields.

Meanwhile, Bryan rode away furiously, avoiding the enemy's posts, which he had previously reconnoitered carefully; swimming streams and clearing fences, and still ever on the spur until he passed the last outpost of the Roundheads, and met a patrol of the royal horse near Oxford. These he would fain have persuaded to follow him and attempt my rescue; but, brave as they were, they knew it was impossible.

"Go back, then," he exclaimed passionately, "and, if you have hearts of men in you, spare not till you come to the mad Prince—God bless him, he's the only man of sense in the army. Tell him that my master is going to be shot for a spy, and if the morrow's sun doesn't find the royal horse in the vale of Lewknor, the daisies there will be wet with the best blood in England."

Having thus delivered himself, Bryan rode back again toward Lewknor as long as his horse could carry him; when the horse dropped, he pursued his way on foot.

The cavaliers, whom Bryan had addressed, were good fellows and true; their foaming horses were soon clattering through High Street; and that sound was scarcely still, when the Prince's bugle rang out, and every trooper in Oxford was in motion.

CHAPTER XXI.

I saw where stark and cold he lay,
Beneath the gallows tree;
And every one did point and say,
"Twas there he died for thee.

OLD BALLAD.

To return to my own story.

The Roundhead troopers that now entered were commanded by one Ditchley—a harsh and brutal soldier, who had served under Wallenstein, and had been attracted like a vulture to his own country by the prospect of blood. He happened first to fall in with the Puritans, who were in want of experienced soldiers and offered large prices for their services. Ditchley accordingly enrolled himself as cornet in Hazlerigg's iron corps. He soon distinguished himself by his acquaintance with arms, and old Testament texts, as well as by his sanguinary application of them. His figure was almost gigantic, and perfectly clothed in armor. When he entered my cell, his face alone was uncovered, displaying the smallest eyes and the longest nose I ever beheld. Through the latter he always spoke, and now delivered himself in a string of texts that were ingeniously adapted to do duty for the curses with which he had formerly indulged. As far as I comprehended the gist of his observations, I understood that I was to gird up my loins in order to be bound to the horns of some altar in Buckinghamshire.

Though fatigued and exhausted, I felt inclined to resist and let him do his worst; but the thought

of seeming to shrink from death roused me from my painful lethargy, and I declared my willingness to follow. Ditchley, brutal as he was, had some respect for a soldier's boldness, and then said that he would not hurry me.

"That you shall not," said my gruff kind surgeon, entering and interposing. "Who ordered thee to take the prey from the hand of the spoiler,—of the healer I should say? This prisoner is in my charge, and as he hath eaten nothing, neither drunk, (except some drugs of potency,) he is without strength; and I tell thee he can not and shall not travel."

Ditchley, addressing the friendly surgeon by the name of "He-tha-heathe," in a tone between that of an execration and sermon, told him to mind his own bloody business and to hold his tongue.

I could only thank the good Samaritan, and express my willingness to depart. I was indeed weary of that melancholy tower. I longed for change, and could not but hope for some little chance of seeing Zillah, anywhere rather than there, before I was to die. Innocent as I was, I knew that my condemnation was certain, and my defense would be unheeded. Hezekiah alone could bear witness to my innocence of any share in this plot, and he, I knew too well, would at least stand aloof.

Nevertheless, I yielded to necessity, as if it were my own will, and only took advantage of my surgeon's intervention to ask for some refreshment. I knew not how much I needed it until it appeared—the savory steak, the foaming tankard—even in that somber hour, were capable of giving pleasure, and of bringing me down from the soaring reveries of a long fasting and enthusiastic dreamer, to the palpable realities of life.

Soon afterward, I was in the saddle, a trooper riding on each side of me, and a score more before and behind. To my great satisfaction I saw that the friendly surgeon accompanied the detachment; and so we came to Lewknor as the sun was setting.

After an hour's rest in a barn, I was summoned to the presence of a Court of War. That tribunal was composed of some half-dozen officers, most of whom wore their armor awkwardly, and looked like citizens who had assumed a knightly dress for some masque or pageant. Such as they were, however, they were my judges, and their functions were soon performed. As spies were the enemies most feared, they received no mercy in those days from either party: if dubbed with that ominous name, the doom of the accused was certain. At once for trial and defense, I was merely asked, "whether my name was correctly stated, and whether I was not found in company with the frizzled Madam, called d'Aubigny, when (taking traitorous advantage of the Parliament's safe conduct) she was detected, as being mother to the damnable plot." I stated the case as simply as I could, and called upon their own minister, Hezekiah, as witness to the truth of my assertion, that I had scorned the office of conspirator.

One of my judges, named Hewson, spoke for all the rest, and thus delivered his judgment:—"This Philistine scorneth to conspire, forsooth; but the scorner is an abomination unto men; yea, more especially when he escorteth foolish women, whose heads and hair are filled with deceit and danger to the Commonwealth. Surely, the churn-

ing of milk bringeth forth butter, and keeping company with traitors produceth treason. The Parliament hath wisely determined to visit this foul plot, and all other conspiracy, with swift vengeance; and why should we stay our hands in this case, where we have the prisoner self-convicted of being a spy as well as a conspirator? Wherefore, we have only to pronounce the sentence upon thee, that by the morning's light, thou be shot to death at the village tree; and meanwhile we shall not withhold from thee such ghostly consolation as our godly ministers can give."

Without further parley, I was hurried out of Court and back to the barn which I shared as a prison, with some others. Fatigued as I was, I refused all offers of refreshment, ghostly or solid, and soon fell asleep, in spite of all the crowd of anxious thoughts that pressed upon my brain.

I must have slept some hours, when I was conscious of a soft warm drop upon my cheek; I started, could it be a human tear that reached me there in the midst of enemies who longed to see me die? The thought was so pleasurable that I feigned to sleep again, in order to collect my ideas; again and again tears fell upon me, and I found that my head was carefully pillowed on some knee. The light began to dawn, and I saw that fetters bound the feet of my kind watcher.

At length a low and piteous voice whispered in my ear, "Master, master dear, it's light, and soon God's sun will rise and ours must set,—Oh one and sorrow!"

"My poor Bryan!" I exclaimed, "now, indeed, I feel the anguish of this hour. My poor boy, well mayst thou shrink from sharing the doom which to me has scarce a pang!"

The boy dashed away the tears from his eyes, and exclaimed reproachfully—almost angrily: "And did you think it was a thought for myself that could make a woman of me? Oh no?—no—no!—it's little that matters what becomes of the life you saved, when the pride and the hope of my heart's gone from me.—And to think I could not save you from being murdered, after all!"

Between sobs and tears, he hastily told me the little story of his own adventures that I have already related; adding that his object in returning to the enemy's quarters was to seek the Lord General or Hampden, from whose noble character he hoped to obtain at least some respite for his doomed master. But he had been observed, pursued, taken and recognized, and condemned to die by the same court of war that had lately pronounced sentence upon me. For him, however, a sadder fate was destined—he was to die a felon's death.

As this sad and faithful story was being told, the light grew stronger and stronger; and the end of my poor Bryan's tale was almost drowned in the beat of drums that summoned the soldiers to witness and assist at our execution. Then there was a pause, ominously broken by a muffled drum, that seemed to sob out our summons to depart. The large door was thrown open by the sentinels from within, as those without knocked with the butt-end of their muskets.

When the sun's rays streamed in gloriously with the fresh morning air, with sweet smells, and all the cheerful sounds of rural life—we appeared to be awakening from some hideous dream; but as soon as our eyes could bear the

light, we beheld the solemn preparations for sending us into another existence. For a moment I was uncertain as to which of us was first to suffer: in our suspense, Bryan flung his arms round my neck, and sobbed as if his heart would burst through his doublet and escape at once from sorrow! But his name was called, and he was himself again; he started to his feet promptly, smiling brightly, as he exclaimed:

"Now I can forgive these rebels everything, since they did not make me see you die."

With these words he walked away proudly after the ill-looking scoundrel who led the way to the fatal tree. Not one word of farewell did that faithful boy intrust himself to speak; perhaps he thought we were to meet so soon! perhaps he feared to unman himself or me before our enemies.

I tried to hide from my sight the approaching terrible scene; it seemed to force itself through my closed eyes, and in such hideous forms, that I looked again at the reality in hopes to mitigate the imagination of it. On went that noble boy, attended by the foul executioner as by some evil shadow—a few soldiers preceded him, and forced a passage through the crowd collected under the large oaken bough, whence hung the fatal cord.

And now they make a space, and pause—perhaps while my poor page utters his parting prayer. Now—high over their heads, I see him, with the evil shadow by his side, and long dark arms busied about his young and comely neck. Now he stands alone, and in another moment he sinks a little, slowly as it seems to me, but his head is on one side, and their deed is done!

At the same moment a hoarse, loud, hasty order is heard—"to advance the other prisoner," and I stepped forward with alacrity. Twelve musketeers stood with arms at the recover, as I was led to the fatal tree. Before I knelt to receive their fire, I turned one glance upon the body of my poor page—ah! it was still struggling; my brain swam with the horror, and I was only roused as the drums beat hurriedly—no muffle this time!—and the trumpets sounded: and I thought it strange, when Ditchley, with an outspoken oath, put his hand upon my shoulder and tried hastily to make me kneel.

Did the soldiers fire too soon and mistake their aim—or what? A volley was heard; Ditchley, with a bullet in his brain, fell prostrate at my feet: the musketeers disappeared; shots came quick and fast and all around me—then loud shouts, and the tramp of cavalry with Rupert's war-cry; then I knew that the royal horse were in among the enemy, and that I was saved. Rough and stern was the conflict all around; when, out from the mass, burst a bold horseman, who swept his gleaming sword above my head, high in air, and cut the accursed cord whence my poor page hung suspended almost over me. All this passed far more rapidly than I can tell, and before the strife around was ended, I had Bryan's form resting in my arms, and the faint struggles that had filled me with horror now thrilled me with delighted hope.

It was old Blount who had done such prompt and ready service with his sword. As soon as he could rein up his horse, he turned quickly round, and looked on me with a tear in his stern eyes, but without uttering one word. Then something caught his sight in the *melée*, that was

still raging, though I scarcely heard the clashing steel and wild curses and deep groans, and quick, sharp shots, that told how vengefully the royal horse were doing their work. All my attention was riveted on the almost motionless form that had flung away its faithful spirit to do me service.

But the cool and impenetrable Blount, seeing that there was no time to lose, had galloped off for a surgeon. He had observed a small and desperate group of Roundheads hemmed into a corner, and among them was one, whom from his dress, he rightly judged to be a leech. It was indeed my gruff friend, He-that-healeth. Vainly however Blount besought quarter for him to the angry cavaliers, who were infuriated by a vague impression that some of their officers had just been put to death by those who were still fighting hard in front of them.

Blount lost no time in further useless entreaties; as if more furious than any of the assailants, he dashed spurs into his horse, rode through the defenders, and laid his iron grasp on the surgeon's collar: then, without giving him or his comrades time to recover themselves, he rode out again through them, literally carrying in his bridle-hand his prize, whilst with the sword-arm, he defended him from friends and foes. A few minutes before, I had been standing in front of the enemy's musketeers: now they and their companions were prisoners or dead, and their half-choked surgeon was employing the best means in his power to undo their murderous work.

My intense anxiety during his operations diverted my mind from the sudden transition in my own case to freedom and to life. I had so made up my mind to die, that I could with difficulty believe in my escape. As, with my fingers pressed upon my throbbing temples, I sat apart, endeavoring to forget suspense in analyzing my own sensations, I heard the gauntleted hands of Blount clasp together with a loud clap, and at the same time, a grave sort of chuckle escaped from the surgeon.

"It's little comfortable," said the latter, gazing with real pleasure on the convulsive gasps of his patient; "It's little comfortable the coming back to this comfortless world; but the lad's saved, and may have yet time to repent him of his manifold malignancy."

By this time the sounds of death and strife had ceased, trumpets were sounding eagerly the recalls, and a body of horse drew near to our rejoicing group. Prince Rupert rode hastily up to me, pressed my hand cordially, and exclaimed energetically, "By St. George, I am a prouder man this morning than if I had marched through London. 'Twas a near escape, however, and all is not done yet. Mount, my friend, one of my led horses, for we shall have to ride far and fast, and to fight for it too, before we see Oxford again."

So saying Prince Rupert rode off, and left us to make the best arrangements that we could. The boy, still almost unconscious, was placed before Blount upon his saddle, and I rode by their side; having first escorted the surgeon beyond the reach of our soldiers: his freedom was all, except promises, that I could then offer him. Our troops were already in column, and moving along the Chiltern hills; the dragoons, with Will Legge, in front; the few infantry, with the prisoners, bringing up the rear as fast as they could move.

It was only the beginning of an eventful day: we reached Oxford as the sun went down; but before then, we had fought our way through Chalgrove field, and Hampden had received his death-wound.

CHAPTER XXII.

That I neither know how she should be loved, or how she should be worthy, is the opinion that fire cannot melt out of me. I will die in it.

SHAKESPEARE.

DAYS passed on; Essex had retired his army from our immediate neighborhood; Bryan was still under the surgeon's hands, but rapidly recovering. With this exception, all outward traces of my late adventure had passed away; but my thoughts were sorely troubled. The strange manner in which, by chance and the ingenuity of Hezekiah, I had been prevented from replying to Zillah's accusation; the uncertainty of her fate, and other anxieties connected with it,—all these were painfully yet pleasurably blended with the remembrance of our last interview. Its very sorrow made the joy more tender, and Zillah's belief of my unworthiness proved sweetly the strength of an affection that could triumph over such belief.

Those who love are never lonely; at least those who love spiritually, for spirit can commune with spirit, though the form which represent them to our earthly vision be severed widely as the poles asunder. The spirit of her who fills our heart seems to pervade everything around us; her smile blends with every ray of light; her voice is heard in every gentle sound; her very breath is felt in every breeze that fans our severed cheek.

Thus it was that I lived in Zillah's imaginary presence; and thus it was that I waited, almost patiently, for the happiness of once more seeing her.

The explosion of Waller's plot had revived the greatest animosity among the political leaders of the revolution; but at no period of the war do I remember a more frequent and chivalrous interchange of courtesies between the fighting men. The former, in the first moment of their excitement, denounced death to all who were concerned in the plot. Poor Challoner and Tompkins were executed at once; but Waller was reserved for a worse fate—to endure a prolonged life, branded with dishonor, and stained by the basest treachery. The leading lords were saved by their great influence and professed penitence.

The accidental battle and victory at Chalgrove proved of great interest to me. Two officers of rank had been sorely wounded and made prisoners; being unable to move, they had been granted parole by Prince Rupert, and this they basely broke. Essex, however, who was of a nobler nature, on remonstrance offered to liberate any two royalist prisoners in their place; and my brother Hugo was thus restored to me.

Our meeting was a very happy one; we had parted in despondency and sorrow; we had undergone trial and danger, and each of us could now read in each other's brightened countenance that our heart's deepest sorrow had been soothed.

We wandered away at once to the quiet Christchurch meadows; and there, under the old trees,

that before and since then have heard stranger tales, I learned from my brother's lips the events of the last momentous week.

On the day of my quarrel with Digby, it will be remembered that Hugo, according to Prince Rupert's orders, had made a reconnaissance, been attacked, taken prisoner, and carried off to Reading. He added to Blount's account of his capture, that that precise servant had done his brave best to rescue him; when he found that was hopeless—even while fighting for his own life—he had struggled near enough to my brother to shout out and inquire "whether he had any commands for his master at Oxford?"

On his arrival at Reading, Hugo, having received some slight wound, was placed under the care of my friend, He-that-healeth, who was characteristically gruff and kind to him. He then learned that Lady d'Aubigny's mission was already well known, and that the only matter not clearly ascertained was the place in which the important paper was kept. On the evening of our arrival at Reading, Hugo was removed to London in a wagon, under escort, with some other prisoners. To his astonishment, among the latter he saw Phœbe; she was treated with respect, well-mounted on a palfrey, and accompanied by her waiting-woman, who rent the air with exclamations of distress.

Phœbe rode close behind the wagon in which her young lover lay bound and so shaded by the cover as to be indiscernible to her: but to him a bright moonlight showed clearly the lovely face of his childhood's playfellow and his manhood's mistress. She looked solemn and pale, but not dejected. The bright fluttering color of her cheek was gone—with the high spirits of which it seemed the outward sign; her radiant eyes were veiled by the long lashes that drooped downward, and sometimes glistened with a momentary tear. But her carriage was calm and dignified, and the character of her beauty, though so changed, was still perfect in its kind. At least so thought the young lover; and so apparently thought the Roundhead leader of the escort, who, riding stiffly by her side, still turned his eyes often, and perhaps involuntarily, on the exquisite countenance of the young "malignant."

And thus they moved along for a little while. The opiate that the surgeon had administered to Hugo could not soothe to sleep his excited spirit; but it wrapt him in a happy trance through which he saw that loved woman as a vision—a ministering angel, keeping off all pain, and softening the very sound of the hostile cavalry as they tramped beside him.

There was but one occupant of the hospital wagon besides Hugo, and he was almost unconscious. A low moan, however, sometimes escaped from him, which made Phœbe shudder, and involuntarily dart a glance for a moment into the rude, uneasy couch of the dying soldier; for dying he was. Hugo heard the death-rattle in his throat, but was too much prostrated to give the alarm. He felt his companion's hand wander over his breast until it reached his neck and long hair. Then some happy illusion seemed sent to shed comfort on the dying man.

"Yes, Jeanie," he muttered faintly; "yes, yes, we won't scoff any more, but we will pray."

And his parched lips moved, and his hands were clasped together, and with one loud moan, he died.

There had hitherto been perfect silence, except for the measured tramp of horses, and the faint clank of armor, and these sounds had become so monotonous as scarcely to interfere with the repose of all around them. And when, through the stillness of all human sounds, that unearthly moan broke forth upon the night, a shudder seemed to thrill through every heart. Phœbe instinctively reined up her palfrey, and the wagoner stopped his horses with a loud Wo! that seemed an almost appropriate exclamation. The officer in command looked into the wagon, and perceived that one of his prisoners had escaped at once from him and life.

"Truly he is departed," said the Cornet, whose youth had hitherto prevented the stern system of his brethren from taking full effect upon his nature. "I trust he died not in his sin," he added, gently drawing the Cavalier's threadbare cloak over his dead face.

Then the procession moved on again, until arrived at Maidenhead, they were stopped and interrogated by the sentinels. Here, after some conference with the commanding officer of the little garrison, the corpse was removed from the wagon, and the procession moved on once more; the shadows of the houses were left behind, and the moon shone out again on Phœbe's face.

But that face was now changed; no longer calm, pale, and resigned-looking, her cheek was flushed with feverish red, and her eyes strove piercingly to scrutinize the interior of the wagon. She had recognized Hugo when the lamp-light was thrown in upon the dead body to remove it, and perhaps she expected momentarily to see the same tragic scene reenacted. At length her emotion caught the young Cornet's attention, and with as much courtesy as the forms of his discipline would permit, he inquired if she was unwell; expressed a fear that she had been too much shocked, deplored his inability to return with her to the village, and concluded by asking her, with some hesitation, whether she would rest herself for a little while in the wagon, as another hour would bring them to their halting-place.

As Hugo listened to this proposal his heart beat wildly. He raised himself as she hesitated, to listen for the next word, and his suspense was rewarded by the wagon being stopped, and Phœbe and her waiting-woman preparing to ascend it.

"But first," said the Cornet, "it is meet that I have this malignant removed. Ho! you Sergeant Resist-the-flesh-and-the-devil dismount, and put our prisoner on the woman's beast of burden; softly, however, for he may be sore wounded."

"Oh! no, no!" exclaimed Phœbe; "sooner would I walk on foot than cause this poor Cavalier to suffer more than he already does." Then observing a very unsympathizing expression on the tough young Cornet's face, she added timidly: "Besides—besides, I have known him before; we were children together long ago."

Seldom has beauty pleaded in vain, especially in manly England, to a youthful heart, and under the romantic spell of moon-lit glistening tears. The young Cornet, to do him justice, tried not to look conscious, and gave the order as Phœbe desired; assisting her, however, into the carriage with something of a martyr's air.

Again the wagon moved on, and Phœbe and Hugo were left together. The waiting-woman, in addition to her former terror and fatigue, shrunk

with dread from the corpse's resting-place, cowered by Hugo's feet, wrapped her head in her wimple, and soon sobbed herself to sleep, or at least to perfect silence.

In the mean time, Hugo and Phœbe gazed on each other with an embarrassed air; the former, now thoroughly roused, and utterly forgetful of all pain, would have thrown himself at Phœbe's feet, or rather at her knees, but that a proud and hurt recollection of the past restrained him. Phœbe seemed like a ghost, desirous of speaking, but unable to do so until first addressed. But gradually the mysterious agency of the features was mediatizing between those two disturbed young souls. Hugo's wore an expression of pained and almost reproachful inquiry, to which Phœbe's replied by an air of frank and fearless confidence, touched with deep tenderness and sympathy. Hugo took her hand, and clasped it in both of his.

At last Phœbe said, softly, "Dear Hugo, are you suffering?"

"Not so much as when last we met," he replied.

"What, at Lady d'Aubigny's?" rejoined Phœbe. "Surely you must be under some strange illusion; and, now I think of it, so seemed your brother too."

If something of a sarcasm rose to Hugo's lips, he was too magnanimous or too simply loving to utter it. He spoke frankly:

"Phœbe," said he, "do you not love Lord Digby?"

That home question needed no audible answer; her countenance replied: no timid blush, no eyelids suddenly let fall to veil the tell-tale eyes, but a full, bright, child-like look of surprise and innocence was there.

"Love Lord Digby!" she repeated. "Love that man, of whom, ignorant as I was, I told you to warn your brother long ago! Alas! if those we love are so ready to suspect and become prepossessed against us, how can we wonder that our rivals are ready and prone to take the darker view of our conduct, if there be room for doubt?"

"But then," rejoined Hugo, "you admit that there was room for doubt?"

"For those who choose to doubt, in love as in religion," said Phœbe, "there is no such thing as perfect confidence. But this is too painful a doubt for me to leave unanswered, and I will answer as simply and confidently as if we were still children wandering hand-in-hand through the old forest of Beaumanoir. I visited Reading with my father and Zillah; my father took up his residence there, I believe, because it was half way between the two great warring parties, and moreover, I suspect, because he was interested in this wretched plot of Mr. Waller's. Zillah wished to be there because she considered it as Mount Tabor, and expected to behold the deliverance of Israel, as she called it; and I preferred to be there too, rather than live like an Eremita at Bifrons, weaving endless embroidery or groundless fantasies among handmaidens. It may be, too, that I had some interest in those who lay besieged at Oxford; but if I had, report soon told me that my interest was not returned.

"In short, dear Hugo—there, turn your poor bandaged head upon this pillow—I heard that a romantic and gallant young cavalier had been very much moved by sorrow for, and sympathy

with, a romantic and beautiful widow. Her husband had fallen at Edgehill; the young cavalier of whom I speak had received his last sigh, and whether he had wafted it unchanged or not to the Lady d'Aubigny's ear, I know not—ah! that jolt! I fear you are uncomfortable—but his attentions did by no means end there. Well, the Duchess of Richmond invited me, her poor kinswoman, to visit her at Oxford, and to see how gallantly all you cavaliers comported yourselves. My father was pleased to have one daughter in the King's party; I myself was a little curious, independent of my loyalty, to visit yon studious city, and observe with my own eyes the consolation of the widow. In short, I went; I was so fortunate as to be lodged in that widow's apartments. I there heard much of the young cavalier, the consoler. He was away, seeking to pluck some laurels from a Roundhead's brow; perhaps he thought that the plant of honor would look well among weeds. I went out hawking with the Duchess of Richmond, and Lord Digby joined our party. I suppose he had nothing else to do, for he devoted himself to me. He sometimes spoke to Lady d'Aubigny, however, concerning *her* young cavalier, and regretted his absence, and then he had possessed himself of some dangerous secret relating to my father, which forced me to be confidential with him. At length, he promised to put me in possession of all the papers which could criminate him, at the same time hinting that for my sake—that is, for the sake of my 'filial affection,' he was running great risk of honor, if not of life. My heart is naturally warm, and his manner was so natural and truthful that I believed him, and a few minutes afterward I told your brother that I had misjudged this man, who had been so generous. I saw your brother's brow darken, but I little thought to what issue my thoughtless words would lead.

"The next day every one went away against Lichfield and Birmingham with Prince Rupert, and many days elapsed before you and your brother came to Lady d'Aubigny's. I saw you from the college windows; I heard your foot upon the stone stairs; every step appeared to fall heavier and heavier on my heart, and when you entered, I had no word—no power to utter one. I did not even look at you; I saw only Kate d'Aubigny's look of triumph as you came. I soon felt that you had passed her by, for I saw a cold, dark shadow cross her face, and the next moment our hands had met. I could have thrown myself on my knees and wept for very thankfulness.

"Just then Lord Digby entered. His eyes sought in Kate d'Aubigny's countenance and mine the history of the last few minutes. He was the last person I should have wished to read my feelings. I received him as usual, even when he ostentatiously claimed my confidence and detained me in the window whilst he explained why he could not, for the moment, procure for me my father's papers. Suddenly you left the room. I expected you to return as soon as my formal visitor was gone: you came not. Soon afterward we heard that you had left Oxford, been wounded, and made prisoner; that your brother and Lord Digby had fought, been condemned, then pardoned. Finally, to conclude this tale of sad adventure, Kate d'Aubigny was enjoined to depart promptly on her mission, and

I was so strongly advised to accompany her, that I had no option to remain. You know the rest.

"We passed freely through these rebels' hands until we reached Reading, and there our property was searched most rigorously for some supposed treasonable correspondence against their State. Soon after the searchers had retired, that dreadful Master Doom entered, and told me, in the language of Isaiah, to prepare instantly to proceed to London. I believe he feared lest my father should insist upon my deliverance. Another hour saw me in my saddle—another, and I am here!"

Having so said, poor Phœbe pressed Hugo's hand against her beating heart, and bending over it, attempted to move away the hair that clustered over his bloody brows, and so to read in his eyes if he were satisfied. It was some time, however, before he could collect himself sufficiently to speak, and when he began, the wagon halted; the Cornet rode up and assisted Phœbe to alight, and soon afterward Hugo found himself once more in a lonely and well-guarded chamber.

CHAPTER XXIII.

How say you?—My prisoner, or my guest?

SHAKESPEARE.

AFTER some hours' rest, Hugo was again summoned to take his place in the wagon; but this time another prisoner shared his straw, and another escort conducted him, with an officer who either could not or would not give him any information as to his companion of the night before. That evening he was lodged in the Tower, having fallen under suspicion of privy to the unlucky plot.

I have before observed, that one of the peculiarities of this civil war was the frequent absence of zeal on either side for the party outwardly professed. It seemed, as when some bridge has given way in the midst of a populous city, many of the inhabitants found themselves on the wrong side of the river, but were fain to stay there until they had some safe means of crossing over to their own.

Among these was the sub-lieutenant of the Tower, who had been handed over to the Round-head Governor, with old guns, and pikes, and bows, as part of its armament. He discharged his duties honestly toward his new masters, as long as those duties did not appear to him to interfere directly with his allegiance to his old one. He was altogether a soldier of fortune, and serve he must; but he would have preferred to serve the King.

The present occasion was one of the rare instances in which a King's officer had been committed to his charge, and he provided for Hugo every comfort that was in his power to bestow; finally, he sent his respects to him, saying that he would be happy to pass an hour in his apartment, after the gates were locked for the night. Accordingly, as the ominous old clock of the Tower sounded nine, Hugo heard a gentle tap at his door, and Sub-Lieutenant Archer entered, making salutation with formal and old-fashioned politeness; only accepting a seat when requested to do so, and with still more apologetic air pro-

ducing a long-necked bottle and a couple of beakers from his capacious pocket.

After so much surgical treatment and thin diet, Hugo felt no objection whatever to this arrangement; and, in short, the end of the bottle found him and his gaoler in familiar and almost confidential conversation. That worthy functionary emptied the last of his bottle with an air of hospitable triumph into Hugo's beaker, whilst with his disengaged hand he produced another flask of the same generous liquid from his other pocket.

"Well-a-day!" he exclaimed, as he drew the cork, "this canary is rich and ripe, but somehow it seems to have lost half of its virtue since the King left London. Now, without compliment to your worship, it is a real pleasure, Heaven forgive me! to talk over the good old times once more, when we all lay together in the gall of iniquity and the bonds of sin. Now tell me, I pray thee, how fares his majesty—the man Charles, I mean? if he be more sorrowful than of yore, I doubt me, he must be well-nigh heart-broken.—He bears himself bravely, say you? It is well. He hath much to bear, so likewise hath his kingdom and the congregation of saints. Well, he was a comely man, and had a royal air; and though thou art a malignant, I can drink thy health—here's to you."

The old soldier's heart warmed as he went on, and he exclaimed, "Yea, by Saint George, so long as they be true men, I can respect a Round-head, and love a Cavalier; but when such men as this false, two-sided Sir Janus come under my guardianship, I have but little toleration for them. But my time is up, and I must e'en take my leave of you, pledging you, for old times and good fellowship sake, one health before I go, in this last choppin'."

"Then here's to the King," exclaimed Hugo, rising from his chair, and raising his cup as high as his wounded arm would let him.

"Well," said the sub-lieutenant with a curious smile, "here's to your friend. And now, for the sake of old times, tell me if there be any service which I can render thee in return for the pleasure of having spent half an hour in the company of an honest gentleman who can speak through his mouth, and not his nose."

"One thing only I would ask," replied the prisoner, "can you give me speech with this Sir Janus, who was a neighbor of mine in the old times you talk of?"

"Aha!" cried the Lieutenant, "I see—I see. Now I doubt whether this crafty old gentleman would like to hold any communication with such a Cavalier—yea, with such a downright malignant; but he hath a daughter, fair as all the cedars of Libanus: of her I can give thee speech in the long gallery, as she passes to the chapel in the morning; and perhaps, if you are of my taste, she may serve thy purpose as well as her smooth-tongued sire?"

Hugo was fain to avail himself of this offer, without deeming it necessary to explain himself more fully to his new acquaintance.

The next morning the latter knocked at his door as ceremoniously as before, and conducted him to the place of meeting with the air and politeness of one who receives, instead of conferring a favor.

"Some little risk I do run," said he, in reply to Hugo's question, "but at the worst they can

only discharge me from my post; and in the bloody times that are coming, an old soldier's hand would be better employed abroad in the field than jingling keys within these four ill-boding walls. Now take thy place in this niche, and I will e'en intrust thee with a halberd and a steel-cap, so thou mayest pass for a sentinel, if wrong eyes should spy thee. The place is dark enough to conceal thy manner, which puts me more in mind of old times than the present."

So saying, the sub-lieutenant placed a halberd in Hugo's hands, and put a steel-cap on his head, carefully concealing his long locks under it. Then he showed him the length of his beat, and Hugo stalked away there, as if he were on parade.

It was still early, and the mists of the river dimmed the light and penetrated even within those mournful walls. Deep silence prevailed, and lasted so long, that the sound of a light footstep at length made Hugo start. A shadowy figure gradually resolved itself into woman's most perfect form, and Zillah approached. Hugo pronounced her name, and she stopped, trembled violently, and leant against a pillar for support.

"Reginald!" she exclaimed, "is it possible thou art escaped from death and danger, to meet me here and shake my resolution?"

"Not Reginald, dear Zillah," whispered Hugo, "but his unworthy brother, who, finding himself a fellow-prisoner with your father, sought to see him, and was kindly permitted to wait you here."

As Hugo spoke, Zillah gradually recovered herself, and greeted him kindly. Her manner was constrained, however; she was very pale, and her eyes seemed to rest on vacancy as she spoke. She confessed that probably Sir Janus would not like to receive a visit from a notorious cavalier, but she would tell him of Hugo's kind intentions; and if Hugo could find himself in the same place the next morning, she would inform him of all that passed. Before then, too, she would have seen Phœbe, she hoped, and learned more of the future fate that awaited them all.

So saying, she opened an adjoining door, and then raising a curtain, passed under it into her father's apartment.

Hugo had nothing more to do but to resume his mock watch, and he was soon roused from his reveries by the approach of two persons in deep conversation. Not wishing to overhear their words, he saluted noisily with his halberd, as he had seen the Roundheads do, and the strangers became silent. Both seemed too intent on their own thoughts, however, to notice him, and they passed, with a slight bend of the head, on the part of the elder, in answer to his salute. He was a stern but anxious-looking man, slightly bent by infirmity, rather than by years, and from the key which he held in his hand, Hugo rightly supposed him to be the Lieutenant of the Tower himself. His companion was a tall dark man, whom Hugo remembered well.

They passed on, and to the warder's great discomfort they approached his door, the master key turned in the lock, but just then the sub-lieutenant hastily presented himself, whispered some words into his ear, and without a moment's delay the lieutenant resumed his key, uttered some apology to his dark companion and hurried away

after his subordinate. Considerable noise and clamor and clanging of arms was soon heard resounding through the long galleries below, but the dark visitor heeded it not. He folded his cloak, passed and re-passed, and paused before the door which Zillah had entered, and then moved away.

After a brief space, silence was restored below, and the sub-lieutenant reappeared;—without haste, or the utterance of a single word, he took away the halberd and steel cap, and consigned Hugo to his chamber. Almost immediately afterward, a real sentinel's heavy tread was heard pacing along the gallery so lately guarded by a cavalier.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Ruffian! let go that rude, uncivil touch!

SHAKESPEARE.

THE second morning of Hugo's captivity passed slowly and without event, until about the hour of noon. Then his door was suddenly thrown open, and without any announcement Hezekiah Doom strode into the chamber; darkening the grated little window's feeble light with his tall form, and for some minutes taking no notice of Hugo, who had risen instinctively to receive his visitor.

At length Hugo spoke:—"This unexpected opportunity is the first, sir, I have had of expressing to you my gratitude for having saved my life."

"Enough, enough of that vanity," said the Puritan, in a stern but mournful voice; "thou knowest not how little I risked, or how gratefully I would then have yielded up my doomed life to Him who gave it. It was not *thee* whom I sought beneath the waters—but a sign as to whether my earthly task were done. It was *not* done; and I was flung back upon existence, like the Prophet Jonah, in order to fulfill my appointed time. Nevertheless, I repent not that thou wert saved, since life to thee is no penance; at least not now, while dreams of glory fill thy brain, and a happy love expands thy heart. Thou art gentle too, and I have marked thee in the battle forbear others when they forbore not thee, and thy sword was more ready to shield than to destroy."

"You have fought against us then?" asked Hugo, touched in spite of himself by the tone rather than the words in which the Puritan had spoken.

"Yea, I have assisted in the good cause, but only as the wind impels the ships of war. My voice filled the hearts of those who fought; but mine own hand never shall wield weapon more. Once, and once too often, it hath drawn the life-blood of a fellow-sinner; and thus attainted, it may never draw the sword of Gideon."

"Surely," rejoined Hugo, uncertain whither this strange discourse was tending, "surely it was not forbidden to Gideon to contend against his enemies, and he shed blood."

"Yea," said the Puritan, "but the warrior's trade may degenerate into butchery, or become sublimed into sacrifice. But I came not hither to talk of such things. Hear me—thou wouldst be free? But thy heart desireth speech with her thou lovest more than liberty itself. I will

lead thee to her; she is in danger from evil men, and still more evil women: thou shalt rescue her, and restore her unto safety. What, then, wilt thou do for me in return?"

Hugo started to his feet, and replied with unbounded and impatient offers of life—fortune—everything.

"But one thing I require of thee," said Hezekiah, slowly and distinctly; "and to that thou shalt swear by the holiest thing that thy shallow papistical faith retains; if I do all that I have promised, thou shalt swear to fulfill my first commands, be they what they may."

"And if you speak truly," exclaimed Hugo, "I will swear to what you will, provided it be nothing contrary to my loyalty, my good faith, or my religion."

"Thy religion!" retorted the Puritan, half sadly, half scornfully. "Well, be it so. Now swear." And Hugo swore.

Hezekiah then returned to the door, at which he knocked three times. It opened, and a diminutive man stepped into the room and deposited a black parcel on the ground; the Puritan then took a seat, bowed his head upon the table, and seemed lost in thought or prayer.

Meanwhile the dwarf, in a subdued and frightened voice, exhorted Hugo to be quick and array himself in the garments he had brought: they were adapted for the most pharisaical Roundhead, but Hugo did not hesitate to clothe his gallant form in their dreary disguise. The dwarf assisted him actively, and gazed upon his performance as a valet with concealed satisfaction, until he cast his eyes upon the long, bright hair that floated down over the Puritanical vestments.

"By the tongue of Rabshekah and the life of Ahsalom!" exclaimed the dwarf, "you must forego that vanity, that becometh rather the tire of a harlot than the head of the righteous."

So saying, he produced an enormous pair of scissors, leaped up upon a chair, and in a moment seized a handful of the obnoxious ornament in his left hand. Poor Hugo! he would have borne much rather than retard his important mission for a moment; but still to be shorn, and as if in mockery, was very trying. While he hesitated, Hezekiah looked up, and his face changed into a scowl so terrific, that the dwarf shrank down as if blasted.

"Finish what thou hast begun, fool, without impertinence," muttered his master, "and let me find thee in half an hour where thou knowest."

The dwarf once more mounted the chair, carefully but quickly folded up the obnoxious hair, and fixed over it a high steeple-crowned hat so firmly as to defy all danger of inspection. Then he girded a long, straight rapier on Hugo's thigh, hastily swept all his cavalier garments into a bag, and disappeared as if afraid of being recalled into a presence that he feared.

The Puritan then motioned to Hugo to follow him. They passed out into the well-known gallery, and as they came opposite to one of the bright old shields, Hugo started to behold the transformation that had been wrought in his appearance. He looked, even in his own eyes, like one of the Zerubbabels or the Habakkuks who then abounded in the Roundhead army. It is true that his gait was rather too bold and free for the habit that he wore, but then his dark companion, for whom all made way, disdained

to alter his step to any conventional usage. When they reached the Tower gate, they found horses waiting for them, and so they rode hastily away toward Charing Cross.

Hitherto they had preserved a profound silence; but when they had dismounted, and entered on foot into the Spring Gardens, Hezekiah thus informed Hugo of the part that it behooved him to act:—

"Ask no questions until thou mayest do so from the maiden's own lips. Thou wilt find her in much fear: draw near unto her and whisper thy name; tell her, if need be, to claim thy protection as her near kinsman. Speak no other word, but let thine ears and eyes be open to my signs."

So saying, Hezekiah drew near a handsome house, near which he paused, until he heard a door opened into Charing street, and footsteps retreating; he then knocked, and was deferentially admitted with his companion by a very prim looking waiting-woman. They passed into a richly-adorned room, with an inlaid floor, over which was laid a carpet so soft that they moved noiselessly into the room beyond. There every luxury seemed collected; the richest furniture, the brightest flowers, the most fragrant perfumes, the rarest pictures; every sense was cultivated almost to sensuality. Hugo's anxious eyes took in all this, for it is wonderful of what exquisite and rapid perception the faculties are capable when thoroughly roused.

In this luxurious apartment there was a deep recess looking out upon the gardens, and to this Hezekiah pointed cautiously. Hugo approached, and there he found Phœbe, with dilated eyes and heightened color that betrayed some violent emotion. As soon as she caught sight of her disguised cavalier, she started to her feet, and endeavored to repel him with a lofty and indignant glance; but while her brow was bent and her nostrils dilated, her poor heart beat visibly through all its covering.

Hugo uttered but one word—her own name; but that one word, together with the look that accompanied it, told her everything. She sank into her seat, and burst into a flood of grateful tears.

Just then a door at the far end of the apartment opened, and a lady of great but somewhat faded beauty entered. She saw Phœbe in a passion of tears; Hugo in a puritanical dress and attitude, standing stiffly near her; and Hezekiah leaning against the wall, with folded arms and abstracted air.

"How now!" exclaimed the Countess of Carlisle, (for she it was,) "my gentle kinswoman in tears; a stranger in the room; and thou, reverend sir, an unconcerned spectator of this rude intrusion?"

Phœbe raised her head to rest her tearful eyes, not on the countess, but on Hugo: observing his constrained and distant attitude, she bowed her head once more.

Meanwhile Hezekiah turned slowly toward the Countess, and replied: "Did I not say I would assist thee? I heard the voice of thy complaint, that this poor maiden had no friend in whom thou or she could confide. Excellent lady that thou art! thou wouldst otherwise fain have removed her from the power of the mighty Man! He is there; he is even at hand in thy private chamber. Let him now come forward

if he list to press his suit; *thy* conscience will be clear, for the maiden has found a protector."

This speech of Hezekiah's was delivered in a tone of command, bleaded with sarcasm. It seemed to tell at once upon the Countess and Phæbe: the former colored high over her rouge; and the latter, when she heard of the mighty Man, rose to her feet, and folding her hands across her beating bosom, stood in a proud and firm attitude, that contrasted singularly with the soft and feminine character of her beauty.

The Countess looked irresolutely toward the door by which she had entered. After a few moment's pause, it opened, and gave admission to a good-looking man, somewhat passed the middle age; he entered briskly, but paused cautiously, and cast a glance of inquiry at the Countess, when he perceived how the room was occupied.

Lady Carlisle assumed a dignified air, and requested, coldly, "to be informed whether Mr. Pym had appointed any friends to meet him at her house, as otherwise she could not account for the intrusion of those whom she now found in her private apartments." The person she addressed had too much craftiness to appear at a loss for counsel: with an audacity which has often served him at more dangerous need, he walked up straight to Phæbe, nodding familiarly to Hezekiah as he passed him by, and taking no more notice of Hugo than if he were not in existence. He accosted Phæbe with a cheerful, kindly air, and congratulated her on her acquittance of all share in the late nefarious plot; insinuating at the same time that it was providential he happened to have influence with her judges.

"Yes, my fair mistress," he continued, "it was well to have justice on your side; but sentence, like everything that proceedeth out of the heart of man, is oftentimes uncertain, and requires a favoring and fearless hand to guide it."

The great democrat ceased to speak, and from very habit he watched the effect of his words as a skillful archer that of his arrow. The prestige of his great success; the marvelous power that he exercised over the mind of the many, by making it his own, by anticipating and satisfying its demands; all this had invested his words for years past with a power before which the spirit of man's rivalry was bowed down.

Not so the mind of woman, however, always weaker or mightier than that of her nominal master, and her real slave. Phæbe saw in John Pym, not the great Tribune of the People, and Dictator of the State; she saw in him only an unacceptable lover; a rather elderly, florid, sensual-looking suitor, whose attentions were by no means agreeable to her. His very assumption of power roused her pride; his statement of it, her vanity; she felt all the satisfaction of a martyr in defying him, and all the triumph of a mere beauty in refusing him. Besides, her true lover was standing by; and what woman would not rejoice in the rare opportunity of proving her proud fidelity, not only to her own heart, but to that of him she loved?

The result of all this was as brief as the theory of it is prolonged. When Pym attempted to take her hand, she withdrew it as if from a taint, and her eyes flashed through the tears that now fell no longer, but hung suspended in their brilliant fountains.

"Justice!" she repeated; "and dare you to

profane that word to ears that you have so insulted? And do you boast that your power averted a sentence that *could* not have been so intolerable as your mediation in my favor? Answer me one question? do you aspire to be the ruler of this land, and have you left therein enough of its ancient virtue to let me feel that I, an Englishwoman, am free? If so, let me depart from this polluted house, and seek freedom and purity anywhere, so as it be not among patriots or Puritans!"

That defenseless girl looked very grand, and almost Pythonic, while she spoke; but poor Phæbe's heroics were no match for the cold sarcastic, subtle person she addressed. Menaces, punishment, the scaffold itself, cannot extinguish enthusiasm, but may oftentimes fan its flame. Ridicule or apathy are far more fatal to its energies.

Pym only smiled indulgently as Phæbe spoke, and though his eyes looked warm admiration, his voice was free from all emotion as he replied, "Very comely art thou thus—thy words are pretty, but their spirit altogether uncommendable. Now, thou knowest, thou art free as the wind that wanders where it listeth; but it is not seemly that a maiden so fair and young should wander through our crowded streets like a roe among the mountains. We will take that thou art well cared for, my pretty one. But meanwhile I have matter of importance for your private ear regarding him you wot of."

So saying, Phæbe's dangerous admirer made a movement to lead her away; but she shrank from him with alarm, and after a rapid glance at Hezekiah's assuring countenance, she exclaimed,

"For my father I fear not; I am assured that he is safe, even from *your* machinations; and were he not, Heaven forbid that I should prefer his safety to his honor and mine own."

Pym was now growing warm, whether from anger or its reverse; and he exclaimed hastily:

"Enough, enough of this; whatever your motives may be for acting tragedy before these godly men, you know that you are among your best friends here. I tell you, you will forever repent not making your father's peace; it may be even now too late; come then, I pray thee, for thine own sake."

So saying, and long accustomed to exercise his own will, he seized Phæbe's shrinking hand, and at the same moment felt a grasp of iron on his own shoulder. Hezekiah had hitherto remained apparently lost in thought, and unobservant of all that passed; but his eye had watched Hugo's anger rising, and anticipated his first movement instantaneously.

The Puritan of politics turned short round, and confronted the Puritan of religion; a world of warring thoughts seemed roused in each, but the angry eyes of the former soon quailed beneath the solemn and earnest gaze of the minister; it was solemn, earnest, and reproachful. Hezekiah was the first to speak:

"He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool," said he. "Would thou sacrifice thy high place as a chief elder in Israel for this Susannah? I tell thee thou art in no condition to act in this matter. The maiden hath well spoken, and she is free; and lo! at hand is one hath a right and the power to protect her; let her go forth, and if she come to evil, the evil be on her own head and upon his. Go, young man," he continued, rapidly, "lead forth the maiden, and fear not;

conduct her whithersoever she would go, but return not, nor look back."

Before his speech was half finished, Phœbe had moved toward the door. Hugo only lingered for the last word of the address, in hope that it might guide him, but at an impatient glance from Hezekiah, he departed, drawing the door after him. As he descended the stairs hastily, he could hear the Puritan minister's voice stern and high, but the only word that he could catch was something about the prophet Nathan.

The young lovers passed hastily out of the house, traversed the Spring Gardens, and then, for the first time, by the notice she attracted, Phœbe remembered that she wore no hood or wimple. Hugo looked anxiously round him through the darkening mist of evening, and was pausing uncertain what to do, when he heard a cracked voice singing the well-known song:

"Plague take Pym and all his peers,
Hurrah for Prince Rupert and his Cavaliers."

He moved eagerly in that direction, and found Hezekiah's dwarf standing in the shadow of one of the old houses that formed the ancient village of Charing. With him was Phœbe's waiting-woman, who threw herself on the neck of her young mistress in the first joy of meeting her. The little dwarf, however, gave no time for explanations; he impatiently caught Hugo by the corner of his Puritan cloak, and dragged him forward. The women followed, and in a few minutes the little party arrived at Whitehall Stairs, where a boat and two watermen seemed waiting for them. The dwarf impatiently signed to his companions to take their places in the boat, and they were soon swiftly rowing down the river.

All preserved a profound silence, except Hugo and Phœbe, who, wrapped in the same cloak, conversed eagerly until they reached the Tower. When there, they shot in under a dark archway, and were soon admitted through an iron grating into a subterranean passage; there they were received by an official of the Tower; he read by the light of his lantern a paper handed to him by the dwarf, and then motioned to our adventurers to disembark.

They followed their guide and jailer up dark staircases, and at length found themselves in the gallery where Hugo had kept his watch. After waiting for some time, their guide was relieved by the friendly sub-lieutenant, who led Phœbe to the well-known door by which Zillah had entered the previous day. The sub-lieutenant seemed pleased at the poor girl's reluctance to leave Hugo, and whispered that it was only for a time. Then she entered, together with her woman, and the door closed upon them. Hugo was conducted to his own chamber; his friendly jailer only saying to him significantly, "By and by."

The events of the last few hours had passed so rapidly, that Hugo was glad to be left in solitude, in order, by thinking over them, to divest them of their dream-like character and indistinctness. His first care, however, was to divest himself of his unpalatable disguise, and he then sat down to muse over poor Phœbe's hurried narrative, which was as follows:

She had been brought to London with considerable form and respect, and taken straightway to Lady Carlisle's house, where she had pined grievously. That lady had received her with eager civility, as directed by her Roundhead

allies. The evening of her arrival, Pym came to see her, professing friendly intentions to put her on her guard against her examination before the Secret Committee on the morrow. He appeared more interested, however, in her than in the plot, and at length Phœbe turned round to seek for Lady Carlisle's protection. That lady had left the room, and a sudden sense of fear seized upon the poor, defenseless girl. She turned to the window casement, thrown open to the warm evening breeze, and as she grasped the strong branches of a vine upon the outer wall, she felt secure. A fall of forty feet, and rough stones below, would afford her a safe refuge. Her visitor saw, and in a moment comprehended her resolution. He seemed to change like magic; he was no longer the daring admirer, but an anxious, fatherly sort of friend, soothing, persuading, and even exhorting to virtue and single faith. But Phœbe scarcely heard him; her eyes were strained to perceive some passer-by, as she shrieked for some assistance. Suddenly a deep and stern voice was heard in altercation and reproach in the anteroom, and Hezekiah entered, accompanied by Lady Carlisle. Pym rose at his entrance, and taking a friendly leave of Phœbe, left the room.

The divine approached her with a considerate and almost deferential air, and sarcastically apologized for Lady Carlisle's absence from her charge. He added that this worthy lady confessed her house to be no fit resting-place for an inexperienced maiden, seeing that it was open at all hours to all the leading statesmen for the good of the cause. But her ladyship had professed her inability to part with her young kinswoman, unless to worthy and responsible hands.

"This thou shalt find betimes to-morrow," he continued; "meantime it is necessary that thou shouldst abide here until thou art cleared of that which they bring against thee. But rest in peace, for this worthy lady will see that thou receiveest no wrong. Two tried and godly men have charge of thee, moreover, as their prisoner; and if thy voice be heard again in complaint, woe unto this house!"

The proud Countess listened to this address patiently and in silence, endeavoring afterward, at the same time, to reassure her young kinswoman, and to conciliate her angry friend. Soon afterward, Phœbe was left to such repose as she could find.

The next morning betimes, Lady Carlisle entered her room, and informed her that certain members of the Secret Committee would have speech with her. There were three of them, accompanied by a clerk. One of the three was addressed by the other as Henry Martin. He was a joyous-looking, florid, most unpuritanical-looking person. His first few questions were keen and searching, and business-like. When they had been answered with all the simplicity of innocence, he seemed suddenly to treat the whole affair as a jest; at the same time appearing desirous of prolonging the examination for mere amusement. One of his companions, however, rebuked him for wasting precious time, and hastened him away. He then once more assumed a formal air and tone, and declared the examinant quite free from suspicion, and therefore from all custody. Scarcely had the members departed, when Hugo and Hezekiah entered the house, and so terminated Phœbe's tale.

CHAPTER XXV.

By that sword I wear,

Which gently laid my knighthood on my shoulder,
 I answer thee in any fair degree,
 Or chivalrous design of knightly trial,
 And when I mount, alive may I not light
 If I be a traitor.

SHAKESPEARE.

ALL was silent in the Tower until the hour of gate-closing, soon after which the friendly sub-lieutenant's knock was heard; the key grated harshly in the door, and he entered. This time the old soldier had brought not only wine, but pipes. He was less formal than before, but something seemed to weigh upon his mind, of which he could not divest himself for some time. Hugo was busied with his own reflections; and in his happy dreams, did not care to anticipate the evil tidings that he felt were coming. The first bottle, therefore, discharged its duty in silence. As the sub-lieutenant drew the cork of the second, however, he uttered a deep sigh, and though he held up his glass to the light, he looked not at it, but sideways at his young companion's face.

At length he spoke thus: "This is old wine; I bought it long ago from my predecessor in this office, and I have used it slowly, for I never drink it except with some good comrade, who reminds me of old times. Such come but seldom, and sooth to say, they stay not long."

"A good omen for me I hope," said Hugo, cheerfully; "for though the wine be good, and its purveyor better, I confess I would more enjoy a bottle of it in other lodgings."

The kind-hearted gaoler fixed a melancholy gaze on his hopeful young companion, who feared that he had given pain, and added: "I feel assured that you, my good friend, would rejoice—almost as much as I should—to see me depart."

"That's it, that's it," said the old soldier, hurriedly, "but I did not know how to say it. Yea! (yes I mean) right glad would I be to see thee depart; but—but—there be more means of departure hence than one."

The speaker's voice became solemn as he uttered these words, and as he ended he cast his eyes on the ground, wishing to spare Hugo the pain of being observed, as he heard this ominous notice. His delicacy was unnecessary, however. Young as he was, my brother had long prepared himself to die; he had looked at death's hideous disguises until he had seen through them, and discovered the true comfort and repose that lay beneath. Nevertheless, it was a solemn sentence for him to hear, and a radiant vision of young Phoebe in her beauty flashed across his imagination. But this he sternly put by, and addressed his gaoler in a scarcely altered voice:—

"I understand you, kind, good man; and now you see, you need not fear to tell me more. When is it to be, and how do they dare to execute a prisoner taken in open battle?"

"Nay, nay," said the Lieutenant, apparently much relieved, and reassured by Hugo's firmness; "I said not when, or of any surety; but thy stoutness entitles thee to know all. You see the Cavalier who occupied this room before you went out to the scaffold, and at short notice, for they called him a spy; so did the man before

him, though he went through a trial first; and that before him was one who left not his match in England for wisdom of words, and bravery of heart—it was the great and dangerous Earl of Strafford. Now you have been absent from here all day, I know not where; but since your return, there have been hasty messengers from Westminster, each countermanding the other's orders; what they were, I know not; for his honor the Lieutenant remembers old times too well, when I served in the Royal army, to trust me with anything but his orders; and he knows that if the man Charles (His Majesty I mean) himself were here, I'd not betray a trust. Well, as I was saying, I know not what the messengers' orders were; but *mine* are to have this chamber altered by workmen to-morrow, and I know that it will be *empty*. I wish to push myself into no man's secrecy, but if you were to tell me whether you went through any trial to-day, I would bid you prepare for the worst: otherwise I understand not this business, for the Secret Committee are not wont to use the scaffold without some sort of trial first held."

Hugo would fain have replied to the anxious soldier's confidence, but he felt himself bound to secrecy: he told him so much, however, as consisted with honor, and concluded by asking him if he knew anything of Hezekiah's private history.

The Sub-Lieutenant looked cautiously round the apartment, and then drew near the door to listen. Having thus assured himself, he answered in a low voice, "Well, I wot I knew him—too much and too little. He is the only man on earth that ever made me fear—I know not what. Ay, 'fore George, I am not alone in that. The Secret Committee that blusters bravely against kings and nobles is quiet enough before this mysterious man; and well they may, for, with the assistance of the Book of Isaiah, his wild and powerful talk would raise half London upon them in an hour's discourse. He comes and goes where he lists, but specially where shot and steel are most at work; and they tell me, that when he preaches from a drum-head to the saints, they fight like so many devils, and ever carry all before them. Well, sir, he'll walk into the Lord General's own quarters after the battle, perhaps, and make him write the 'true relation,' as they call it, of the fight; and then he'll go out upon the field, and preach all night to the dying soldiers. Before next sunset, he will be with the Secret Committee, or passing all our sentinels like a ghost, and closeted with the Lieutenant of this Tower. But, most of all, he seems to have bewitched your old prisoner, with the heathen name. Sir Janus, they say, gave him shelter in old times, when he was persecuted; and he can now do anything with his old protector, except make him an out and out Commonwealth man, like himself."

The Sub-Lieutenant paused, and seemed to be contemplating in silence the character he described. At length he resumed, in reply to a question from Hugo.

"Why, where he comes from no one seems to know; but," he added in a low and fearful tone, "some say he comes from the dead, and some that he has sold his right hand to Satan, for no one ever saw him remove it (if he has one) from his cassock! Sure I am that sometimes he looks

as if he ought to be in his coffin, and sometimes he seems as if he had the life and strength of a dozen men in him."

"Well," said Hugo, "be he man or fiend, he once saved my life, and he has proved my friend this day; I scarcely think, therefore, that he would lend himself to my destruction."

"Be not too sure," said the old soldier, shaking his head and looking very grim. "He doesn't move after the laws or customs of this world. I verily believe that if he thought it would advance the cause one dagger's length, he would fling his mother from the top of the White Tower as pleasantly as I would crush this empty glass. Oh, if thou hadst heard him preach, as I have done, on the goodly text, 'Cut off thy right hand and cast it from thee,' it's little thou couldst say that a head or so would stand in his way; no, not if it were that of anointed Majesty itself."

"Why, you would make him out little better than a papistical Jesuit," said Hugo, interested in spite of himself on his behalf.

"There be Jesuits, my young friend," replied the Lieutenant, "in all creeds and in all professions; if by that word you mean men who scruple not as to means, so that the end be sufficiently justifiable in their eyes, or tempting in its execution. This Hezekiah, however—"

"Peace, babbler!" said the stern voice that the poor Lieutenant feared so much; the door was thrown open; Hezekiah strode into the room, and the Lieutenant of the Tower, who had accompanied him, remained outside, in a respectful attitude. Poor Archer started to his feet, and his look inquired fearfully whether he had been overheard. If he had, his unwelcome visitor did not condescend to notice it; he merely motioned him to retire; the door clanked violently behind him, and poor Hugo once more found himself alone with the Puritan divine.

Like a crowd of people passing through one narrow door, this person's thoughts struggled forth so eagerly, that they often produced a temporary stoppage of each other; but no outward sign of embarrassment appeared on his calm dark face, as with his eyes alone he seemed to inquire whether he might trust the imprisoned royalist. Hugo for some time imitated the silence of his visitor, whom he understood so little, that he feared to address him.

At length the Puritan spoke:—"Thou hast heard," he said, "what the vulgar speech is concerning me—poor simple worm that I am—what thinkest thou?"

"I think of you," replied Hugo, "only as one who saved my life long ago, and who this day conferred a yet greater favor on me. But, before I say more, let me entreat you to use your great influence that this worthy sub-lieutenant do not suffer through his kindness to me; he is still faithful to your service."

"It is known that he is so," said Hezekiah, drily; "nevertheless he is discharged from his present office, to command a company of volunteers in the field; but he hath a hundred pieces given him for refusing to surrender his trust to those traitors of the plot. Now for thine own case: he hath well said that thy place will be empty on the morrow, for thou wilt be free. The Lord General, who too much loveth to make friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, hath been won over by high-sounding words of heathen chivalry, to give up to the malignants two

of their officers, because two of the godly have escaped, notwithstanding some foolish parole. Thou art one of the freed."

Hugo knew not how much the thought of approaching death had chilled his blood, until he found it rushing warmly through his veins once more; and with it came thoughts of Phœbe. The Puritan watched his countenance with keen but calm scrutiny, and soon added,

"To-morrow thou must depart, and before day, to join the unhappy, godless camp of Charles Stuart. Surely thou hast seen its iniquities, and the swift ruin that impends over the oppressor. Turn thee, then, whilst it be yet time, and join the standard of the Lord. Young, and brave, and true as thou art, thou mayest thyself be the Chosen One—that Gideon—whom alone our mighty men are waiting for. A roused people, with souls lately enslaved, and bodies all in pawn to a tyrant for liberty to live, await thee. There is, with us, no mammon-wealth, no courtly honor to reward thy noble sacrifice, or damnify it with one selfish stain. Toil, danger, ignominy, perhaps death, await thee; and instead—only a people's gratitude, and perhaps a martyr's crown. There is a witness in thy soul for the truth of the great cause: half stifled by doubt, and disguised by prejudices, thy nobler instinct still tells thee it is true. Thy cause, what is it? The pleasure of a fantastically crowned man, and the fantastic will and the formal creed of his servile and prelatric favorites. Our cause is that for which martyrs and heroes in all times have proudly died—the salvation, temporal and eternal, of the people."

Thus far the Puritan had spoken, with the restrained voice and manner of the practiced orator; but he then warmed with his own words, caught fire from the velocity of his own thoughts, and burst forth into one of those extraordinary harangues by which he had so often moved the people, and even senators, to his will. Unlike many of his fellow preachers, his enthusiasm was sincere, and of lofty pitch; while to all the fearfulness of Hugh Peters, and the vehemence of Vicars, he united the skill of the practiced rhetorician, and the graces of the scholar. Many of the Puritans, when carried away by their subject, forgot or abandoned the scriptural phraseology of their common conversation; but this man was so thoroughly imbued with the style and thoughts of the sacred writers, that his language became more biblical in proportion as it was unstudied: he would have been as easily understood by the warriors who followed Joshua or Gideon, as by the citizens whom he invested with all the attributes of Israel; he might sometimes have been supposed addressing the men of ancient Jerusalem, instead of those of the modern Jewry.

Hugo listened in silent wonder and admiration to the words of the Puritan, as they rolled forth in all the power and pomp of impassioned oratory. His own imaginative and ardent spirit caught up the inspiration of the preacher, and he could himself have continued in the same strain when the sonorous voice to which he listened had become silent. Nevertheless, he only felt as a spectator of a play: he could not understand that a proposition to turn traitor had been actually made to him; it seemed impossible. So he did not even feel offended.

After a few minutes' pause, to let the tran-

tion become less abrupt; he replied that he was grateful for the good opinion, and the interest that the preacher expressed concerning him, and that he regretted he was unable to answer arguments eloquently and powerfully urged.

"At least," he added, "I am unable to answer you here, and with my weak voice; but in the field, and with my heart's best blood, my answer shall be always ready. The very art and strength of your learned controversy proves with how much difficulty you arrived at your conclusion to believe: my loyalty is a simple faith, in which—come weal, come woe—I live and die."

The Puritan gazed on the young Cavalier with a mixture of scorn, pity, and admiration: "Thou art possessed by some evil spirit," he exclaimed, "that, like the lying prophet unto Ahab, hath power to assume the garb of truth to lead thee to destruction. Yet, verily, my heart yearns toward thee, and I would snatch thee as a brand from the burning. I tell thee, even now, I see the end of thy brief career, ere this evil warfare is accomplished—not in the open field, with banners waving, and shouts resounding to cheer thy dying heart; but hemmed in by scorching walls and pitiless flames, vainly fighting for another moment of gasping life—even thus hopeless and helpless shalt thou perish for thine evil cause!"

"So be it!" was Hugo's sole reply; he spoke solemnly, for the preacher's voice and manner gave him menace the air of prophecy, but he spoke firmly, as one who was left, or would accept, no choice.

The preacher stood long and thoughtfully: some traces of emotion were just visible, and then repressed upon his sternly expressive countenance. At length he spoke:

"We part, then, for the last time. I have wished thee well, and would fain save thee from the coming doom. Thou hast chosen otherwise. But thou shalt behold her whom thou lovest, for thy love is the best part of thine unregenerate nature. Thou shalt see her sister, too, whom I may not see, and thus you shall say unto her: 'At midnight, and not at morn, shall ye depart; even as Paul was sent down to Caesarea, when the Chief Captain feared for his people.' And now for thine own part, if thou returnest unto the home of thy fathers, tarry not there; but haste thee straightway to thy people, and escape the coming judgment."

Having thus spoken, the preacher strode to the door, knocked three times, and was answered by the grunting voice of the dwarf, who turned the key and flung open the door. Hugo followed at a sign, and almost immediately afterward found himself ushered into the room by which he had stood sentry; the dwarf entering with him, and crouching at the door as soon as he had closed it.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Hope! thou sad lovers' only friend!
Thou way that may'st dispute it with the end!
For love, I fear's a fruit that does delight
The taste itself less than the smell and sight.

COWLEY.

THE prison apartment in which Hugo now found himself was considerably larger than his own; and it was so dimly lighted by a single cresset lamp that objects in the center alone were

visible. There sat the old Baronet, shading with a trembling hand the eyes, that strove to penetrate the darkness and ascertain who stood before him. Hugo paused awhile, unwilling to intrude himself abruptly, even on his friends; but the dwarf precipitated his movement by growling out angrily:

"How now, Sir Cavallero, hast thou got naught to say or do, after periling the preacher's credit and my skin in bringing thee hither? The man they call Lieutenant of the Tower will soon arrive, and if thou art not found in thine own cell we shall have pretty roysterings."

Hugo immediately advanced, but was met by Phœbe, who laid her hand upon his arm, and drew him into one of the shaded recesses of the chamber.

Sir Janus followed them with his eyes, and exclaimed, as if to bystanders, "I call every one to witness that this Cavalier is here with no privy of mine. If his presence here be not some snare to entrap an innocent old man, I conjure ye to have him removed."

The dwarf appeared to enjoy the prisoner's uneasiness immensely; he wriggled himself over to the Baronet's chair, and made him start as he felt his ankles clasped in the dwarfish but fat fingers of his visitor.

"Start not!" exclaimed the little man, "I was but taking thy measure for leg-irons—those of poor Tomkins will suit thee well, and he will want them no more, as he was hanged yesterday. Now be still, wilt thou? else will I give the alarm, and let the garrison know of thy Cavaliero conspirator."

The prisoner started to his feet terror-stricken, but he was too nervous to speak. He moved toward Hugo in order probably to expel him by main force, when a noble form rose before him and interposed; then in a mournful but sweet tone came Zillah's words:

"Father, my father! what wouldst thou do? Bethink thee that this apartment is thy home, and must show thy hospitality, especially to one of the few old friends that remain from happier times."

"True, true!" said the old man, pausing irresolutely, and then sinking back into his chair. Whatever might have been his other pretensions, his hospitality had been always genuine; as such perhaps he was the more proud of it. "True, as to that," he repeated after some thought, "but Heaven grant that *thou*, too, art not plotting against me in furtherance of some patriotic or godly scheme. And this creature, too," he added, spurning the dwarf with his foot, "must I also submit to his intrusion and his insolence?"

"Turn me out, turn me out!" screamed the dwarf, rubbing his hands and chuckling with delight. "Turn me out, I ask no better: and my pretty mistress here will fetch me back—aye, tall and beautiful as she is, with all her pride, she'll fetch me back."

And the dwarf leered hideously into Zillah's anxious eyes.

"Yea, father," she exclaimed, "let him too abide here for a little season; to-morrow and ever after, I trust, thou shalt choose thine own company, when we are free from the snares that now encompass us."

The dwarf leered still more hideously and sarcastically, and screamed "keek, keek." Sir Janus looked up from the dwarf to his stately

daughter, and a different thought seemed to take possession of him. Hitherto he had been entirely occupied with the cares of his own safety, but now a nobler feeling stirred within him; a father's sorrow spoke in his reproachful tones as he exclaimed:

"And have I been deceived by thee, too, my child! Hast thou, too, been leaguering with mine enemies against an innocent old man?—Else what can such as thou have in common with this wretched creature?"

Once more the dwarf screamed "keek, keek, keek," but in an angry mood. "Yes, yes, old furbelow, you *have* been deceived, and she has been deceived, and they who think themselves wiser than either have been deceived; and a whole nation is deceived, tall as they are—keek, keek, keek! and shall be taken in the crafty wiliness that they have imagined."

So saying, the dwarf drew himself up to his full height, of some three feet, and hideously imitated the noble attitude of his master; then, bursting into a guttural laugh, he stood upon his head, and almost thrust the high heels of his shoes into the Baronet's indignant face. A slow step was heard outside, and seemed to linger on the threshold; it produced a wondrous change upon the dwarf; in a moment he was crouching near the door, whimpering like a frightened hound.

Upon Zillah's very different nature, too, that slight sound seemed to produce a strong effect. At her father's words, the first she had ever heard in reproach, she had fallen on her knees by his side; and winding one fair arm round his neck, seemed about to pour out her heart's feeling in all confidence on his awakened ear. But now she rose suddenly, her pale cheek becoming flushed, and her voice assuming that grave and solemn tone to which it had been latterly accustomed.

"Father," she exclaimed, "bear with me a little longer and I will tell thee all. If I have erred in taking too much upon me, I have been punished by the humiliation and the misery of concealment. Bear with me until to-morrow, and believe that no earthly motive but thy safety can influence me now. Thou art ill, and must have rest before our long journey; let me see thee to thy bed, and then upon my sister and me only can rest the responsibility of this Cavalier's visit. Remember he is the son of thine ancient, noble friend, and the friend of thy children."

The old man, thus soothed, resigned himself to his daughter's will, and suffered himself to be led into the adjoining apartment. Hugo was left alone with Phoebe.

Reader! whoever thou art, thou hast loved, and in loving, hast known the marvelous vicissitudes of hope, and fear, and rapture, and despair; and how they may all be blended in one paroxysm of that mysterious passion, until bursting heart and aching brain threaten annihilation to our frail being. Then, at some magical touch of the loved form, the pent-up storm of feeling finds vent, pours itself forth in an exulting tide by a thousand invisible channels of sympathy, and at length ebbs back into a soft satisfied calm; soothed, ennobled and enriched by the blessings it has received, and the force it has distributed in its sympathetic career. Thus, gradually as the long-prisoned and laboring feelings of two hearts flow into one another, their currents become blended, and they settle into calm—a calm in which heaven is re-

flected. The greater the hardship, the more imminent the peril, by which such happiness is purchased, the more intense and concentrated is its delight.

So Hugo felt; clasping Phoebe's hand in his, he remained motionless and silent, without the power or the wish to give voice to the unutterable feelings that glowed in his eyes and thrilled in every fiber of his frame.

Thus the young lovers might have remained for hours, rapt and contented in that innocent trance of pleasure, but the Tower clock tolled loud and solemnly, and the dwarf seemed awakened by the sound. His unnatural cry of "keek, keek, keek," came loudly from his dark corner; he then set himself in motion and rolling himself over to where Hugo sat, he squatted on his heels and peered into the glistening eyes that were gazing on a far different object.

For a few minutes the dwarf remained quiet, surveying the spectacle before him with a sort of malicious curiosity. Then he screamed louder than before "keek, keek! one half hour of the clock is gone; another, and thou art gone. Have done with this speechless foolery and talk, will ye; a murmur on thy silence! my head aches with this churchyard stillness and darkness."

Hugo raised his foot to spurn the imp away, but he had wriggled himself off, and was again crouching by the door, through which the same slow footfall had again been heard. Hugo would soon have delivered himself to his happy reveries, but that Phoebe spoke:—women are always the first to display presence of mind—if they be innocent; if not, they are more reckless.

"Precious time," said Phoebe, "is indeed flying, and we shall soon regret having learned so little while it lasted. Tell me, how came you here, and what hope have you of release? we depart to-morrow for our home, and oh! how welcome will now be that quiet from which, so lately, I yearned to escape!"

Hugo had little to tell, and that little was soon said. His questions were more numerous, and in reply to them he learned the following tale from Phoebe:

"I need not tell you," she proceeded, "with what joy I found myself once more in my poor father's and in my sister's arms. And Zillah was so changed—so affectionate, and consoling, and even confiding. You know how cautious and distant she had of late years become—because I would not turn Puritan with her and foolishly laughed at her patriotism and her Saints. She now pressed me to her heart and wept over me as if I were a little child whom she had lost. Again and again she embraced me, and having prevailed on my poor father to lie down, (for he is now very weak, I fear,) she led me into her own little room and kneeled down and prayed a prayer that touched me to the soul, and made me feel as if I were praying too, and that most humbly and contritely. Then she drew me toward her, and laid her head upon my bosom and asked me, in her low sweet, soothing voice, to tell her faithfully all that had happened to me since we parted. And so I did, even as if I was speaking to myself—and once or twice I could feel her start, as I mentioned Lord Digby and your brother, and my escape from Lady Carlisle's horrible house. But she listened in silence until my story was all told, and then she embraced me very tenderly. Oh! I never knew before how much

I loved her, or how much I had needed such a sister.

"She asked me some questions about Kate d'Aubigny and your brother Reginald, and then said that she, too, had much to tell, but that time was now pressing; for my father had procured his liberty, though many were opposed to it—partly she feared, because of his large possessions, which might have been confiscated for less dangerous charges than had been made against him. Even now, she said, she was in anxiety lest counter-orders should arrive before dawn to stay his departure.

"Now, how shall I tell you, dear Hugo, what next she said? You must look away and unclasp my hand, and I will try to think of you as when we were children long ago and I used to tell you everything."

"Yes, yes!" exclaimed Hugo, "let us have that long-ago back again, when I used to call you my little wife, and no one smiled or looked the graver for it."

"Well! suppose it is now that long-ago," said Phoebe, "and that we are playing under the old linden tree, and that you call me by that fond and foolish name once more, and that my father overhears you and is very wroth, and swears (until he remembers that it is not safe to swear) that if you call me by that name he will be branded as a Cavalier by the all-powerful saints, who will make a millennium for themselves at Castle Bifrons, and spoil him like an Egyptian, and turn him out to beggary—after a life-long watchfulness to secure his possessions for his children, and for those that come after."

Phoebe said all this with something of her old smile upon her lips, although a tear in her anxious eyes told Hugo how true was the allegory. What his reply was, may be imagined, but Phoebe, as soon as she recovered from its consequent discomposure, resumed, more thoughtfully than before.

"Dear Hugo, it cannot be; my father is old and his wishes are sacred to me; he is ill and that makes them the more solemn. I have not Zillah's firmness or lofty character, but I have a wayward little will of my own, which, when it is by chance in a right direction, is very difficult to shake. We part to-night, and we must meet no more till this cruel war is over, which needs be soon; hypocrites and fanatics can never ultimately triumph over our righteous King; and then we may meet, even as we have met, without reproach, if not with a happier hope. Go then; rejoin the standard of our anointed King, and win fresh honor from his enemies. There—the clock strikes the hour of separation, I have but one word more. These are times that make heroines of mere girls, and with a proud and willing heart I can bid you go and fight valiantly, as you were ever wont to do in the van of battle. Triumphant or defeated—living or dying, I am still and forever your fond and devoted—sister."

A croak from the dwarf and a rattling of keys at the door interrupted this last farewell. Zillah had glided forward and received her sister in her arms; she held out her hand to Hugo in farewell.

"Tell Reginald," she said, "that I now know all, and how I wronged him in supposing him a spy: tell him, too, that my last words blessed him, as those only can bless who bid an eternal farewell."

The door, for some time ajar, now opened wide, and the Lieutenant of the Tower made hasty signs, which soon brought Hugo to his side, and almost immediately afterward he was alone in his own cell.

Then, for the first time, he recollected the message that he had been desired to give Zillah as to her departure at midnight, but it was now too late. All was profoundly still in the long gallery, and his own strong door defied all attempts to open it. The events of the last hour would have made him wakeful, even without this anxiety; and by the time the clock tolled twelve, he had wound up his thoughts to such painful excitement, that the faintest sound became audible to his ear. He could hear an armed but cautious tread in the gallery—he could trace it to the apartment he had lately left—he could even hear the cautious knock, oftentimes repeated, without an answer. Then came impatient whisperings, and after long delay, other footsteps (some so light, yet the most audible of all,) were heard, and then silence settled down on the grim tower once more. They were gone, and he was fain to be glad.

CHAPTER XXVII.

A devil, a born devil, on whose nature nurture can never stick; on whom any pains humanely taken, are all lost. And as with age his body uglier grows, so his mind cankers.

SHAKESPEARE.

MORNING soon dawned, and Hugo was awakened from a feverish sleep by the sounds of loud altercation in the gallery. He momentarily expected his own release, but it came not. The hours rolled on, and a turnkey entered at the usual time with the prisoner's usual repast. At the same time the dwarf strutted in with an air of importance, and motioned authoritatively to the turnkey to leave the room. That functionary complied, only resenting his expulsion with a contemptuous grimace.

"Eat, good lad," said the dwarf, condescendingly to Hugo; "eat, in order that thou mayst have stomach for my tidings. I don't care if I taste a cup of that Canary myself, for I am well nigh weary with all the public business that presses upon us just now. Ah, well I wot, my brother Geoffrey took the right side of the post, as old Jamie used to say at Newmarket. The malignants have little to do in comparison of us, into whose hands the spoils of the wealthy are confided."

"Drink, then," said Hugo, "and forget the cares of State; and, when it suits your convenience, inform me what is to be my fate."

Hugo spoke with kindness to the poor dwarf, because, hideous as he was, and even malicious, he was associated with most dear recollections. The little man looked pleased and flattered: he held the deep cup to his lips with a pertinacity that proved how keenly he enjoyed it, and his red eyes twinkled as he laid it down.

"Ha, ha," he exclaimed, "the bursar of the tower uses thee well. I warrant thou payest two, or it may be three nobles above allowance for thy cup and trencher. Well, a poor prisoner can do no better with his coin: the stomach is the only free organ he possesses."

"Except the tongue," observed Hugo, "and I would fain be informed by yours to what motive I am indebted for your visit."

But the dwarf was in no hurry to reply: he was supremely happy, seated in a high-backed chair, with one beaker of wine down his throat, and another sparkling before him. He had cocked one leg over the other, and was admiring its proportions, when Hugo repeated his question as courteously as before. Never yet was courtesy wasted or misplaced. It is the due of heaven-born man to man—the benevolence of manner; ennobling a benefit conferred, and removing all humiliation from a benefit received; it is the soft tongue that breaks the bone, repels the insult with dignity, and gives protection, without patronage: to the orator in the forum, the warrior in the fight, the lover in the bower, the noble in the hall, the citizen in the street—it is equally the test of the superior man. Even the misshapen and misinformed dwarf was not insensible of its effects; the more so as he had been little accustomed to it in the course of his unhappy life.

"You ask me, good youth," he said, complacently, "why I am come to see thee: why, partly because I like thee, and partly because I have some business with thee; but as my preceptor is away, I am in no hurry to finish it, and put an end, even for a time, to our acquaintance; so here's a good health and better times to you;" thus saying, the principal part of the dwarfish face disappeared into the beaker.

Hugo waited patiently until it emerged again, and then demanded "whether the preceptor was not commonly called Hezekiah Doom."

"True, true," replied the dwarf, "by the uninitiated he is so termed. We who know him better call him the preceptor."

"And am I to call you his pupil, his attendant, or his assistant?" inquired Hugo with a smile. "Keek, keek," chuckled the dwarf; and then recollecting himself, he added with dignity, "I am his *confidant*, and can tell you anything relating to him for the last five years."

"Then where were you the year before last, when the preceptor was in Lincolnshire?" asked Hugo.

"Ah! those were fine times. I was in a show. I had leave from the preceptor for a space; and I then got more money in a week than I now do come by in a month."

The wine had now got full possession of the dwarf's brain, and he spoke so strangely, that Hugo began to despair of learning his message; he made one more attempt, and as he did so he rose from his chair and began to pace up and down the room in his impatience. Perhaps there was something in his slow and measured tread that recalled the preceptor unpleasantly to the dwarf, for the poor, little man shrank instinctively as he approached.

"I will tell; I will tell," he screamed: "you are to set forth at nightfall, and will find a horse at the Barbican; and to save interruption, thou shalt have thy old Puritan disguise, as well as a pass from the Lord General."

"And the preceptor has ordered all this?" inquired Hugo.

"The secret committee have ordered it," said the dwarf, "but the preceptor took care that these orders should have effect. Oh! he's an awful man, that preceptor."

"And yet he gave you leave to become a show," said Hugo.

"Eh, no! he never gave me leave to do anything; I became a show for my own profit and delight; but when the act against play-carts and actors came out from London, the mob set upon my stage, and pulled it to pieces, and had well nigh stoned me, when I was rescued by the preceptor, and I have kept close to him ever since."

"You have done well, doubtless," said Hugo, "especially if you love him."

"Love him!" shrieked the dwarf in his old manner; "I love not, but I fear him, body and soul. Oh! it must be grand to be feared as he is feared. I try to be as frightful as I can, but though I sometimes make people screech and shudder, I can't terrify as he does. Ah! even now, as I whisper, I think he hears me though he's far away, and when he wrings out of me all that I have said and done this day, I shall crawl and cower under him; I know I shall," and the poor dwarf hid his large face in his fat hands and sobbed aloud.

Hugo was touched with his uncouth grief, and endeavored to console him; he even offered to take him into his own service: the dwarf looked up wistfully and gratefully at his kind words, but he started with indignation at the offer.

"Service!" he exclaimed. "No, no; no service for me. The preceptor knows my value, and may employ me as he lists, but never will I do the bidding of any mortal man save his."

"If he be mortal," said Hugo gravely. The dwarf turned a look of fearful inquiry on my brother's face, and then hiding his own, once more sobbed aloud.

The turnkey now entered to remove the remains of Hugo's almost untasted meal, and the dwarf letting himself slowly down from the high-backed chair, saluted Hugo solemnly, and retired with the gaoler.

The day was gone; twilight shadowed the old Tower, and Hugo was set free. His heart bounded as he heard that word pronounced, and he could scarcely restrain his impatience, when the dwarf presented himself with a bundle of puritanical garments and insisted on his assuming them.

"At the best of times," said the little man, "it were dangerous for a swash-buckler like thee to be seen in these parts of the city; but now the people are so wild at the escape, as they term it, of that perverse old man and his spy daughters, that they would mob thee like a mad dog and rend thee like a garment—yea, verily."

Hugo was obliged to admit the force of this reasoning; he donned the Puritan attire, sallied forth into the street, and found his way to the Barbican. There was the dwarf before him, holding a good horse by the bridle, and apostrophizing it with great affection; he assisted the young cavalier to mount, wished him a good journey, and disappeared.

Hugo rode on unquestioned through the town, traveled as fast and as far as his horse could carry him, and after a brief halt, and some risk from our sentries, (owing to his puritanical disguise,) at length reached Oxford in safety.

I need not dwell upon the happiness with which we brothers met; upon the hours—too

few—we passed together, before we separated once again to meet no more.

The Queen had now arrived at Oxford, where constant festivities celebrated Her Majesty's return, and the brave battle of Roundaway Down. Court splendor and chivalrous pageantry revived, and for those who could banish thought (and they were not few) the aspect of life was brilliant. The Queen was still beautiful; if her gracious brow had assumed a shade of thought, it well became the resting-place of a crown. That brow was still most dazzling fair; her eyes glanced very brightly, and could reward or prove wherever they fell. Her mouth was equally expressive, and if it pouted sometimes, no subject could complain of that which his monarch witnessed far oftener.

Her Majesty's grace and spirit in her withdrawing-room was admirable, and she had been so long with the army of the North that she had imbibed a martial taste, right well adapted to her soldierly court. Besides the reviving influence of her presence, her Majesty had brought men and arms and money, all which were badly wanted; for a few days, accordingly, every one was in high spirits and all seemed to promise well.

But alas! the Goddess of Discord seemed to have arrived in the train of her most gracious Majesty. Almost instantly, two hostile parties—those of the King's and Queen's favorites—became formed; and while their royal master and mistress continued fond as ever, their servants were almost at daggers-drawn. Digby was then in his element; every hour had its intrigue, every college its party. Some few, as Lords Falkland, Southampton, and Carnarvon, stood neutral, looking sadly on. Edward Hyde became cautious and reserved—old Secretary Nicholas hung his head more than ever, and shook it not unfrequently. Prince Rupert alone was still himself, preserving his high spirits, and usual bearing alike toward courtier and soldier—finding fault occasionally with the lack of discipline and swearing roundly at them all.

"Hastings," he said to me one day, "since the money came with our good Queen, we are poorer than ever, as it seems to me. Beshrew me if I can get enough to keep powder in the men's bandoliers, or dry bread in their honest mouths. I am now endeavoring to raise money on the pledge of the first town we win; and to be candid, I am about to begin with you."

I smiled as I produced my only purse, and rolled out its contents upon the table.

"There," said I, "are three shillings and one groat, which is all that I have in my possession, or am likely to have at present. My troop is two months in arrears of pay, and your Highness knows, that since I joined the standard, I have never received one farthing from his Majesty."

"Tut, man!" said the Prince; "I know you've no money, well enough—who the devil has? but you've got the next best thing—credit, and if you and two or three other reputable men will join me, we may be able to raise a few hundreds, to put our troops in marching trim for Bristol. There's a rich town for you, my friend, and I promise you, a good paymaster, when the royal standard and the gallows do their duty."

I made some demur to giving his Highness my credit, however welcome he would have been to

my money; but I promised that if I could not furnish him with the latter in the space of a fortnight, the former should be at his service.

"Honestly said," exclaimed the Prince, "I think, however, the word of a Christian has still some weight, even among our money-lenders; and, as I shall pledge your money or credit for such short space, I count upon the precious commodity at once. Good by."

I had been for some time anxious that Hugo should revisit our long deserted home, but thank Heaven, I did not propose it to him. So soon, however, as he heard the Prince's request, he at once declared his desire to return to Beaumanoir, as he had now the excuse of necessity and the King's service.

"I shall see Phœbe once more!" said he, joyfully, "and within the fortnight I hope again to embrace you, and furnish you with the means to redeem your pledge. The sale of my spare horse will furnish me with the means to travel, and the pass I received on leaving the Tower will carry me through all danger. One thing I have to ask you. Bryan is now quite recovered, he is brave and trustworthy, and wondrously cunning for his years. Let me have him with me to send him back to you if there be need."

This proposition gave me great pleasure, and Bryan himself seemed to rejoice in the prospect of escaping from Oxford, where the story of his late adventure was by no means forgotten or losing strength.

The very next night I saw my brave brother depart. I accompanied him as far as the first outposts of the enemy, and as I clasped him to my heart, I felt an ominous foreboding. He, on the contrary, was in high spirits, and looked as brightly happy as if he were immortal—as indeed his better part must be—though the form I loved so well be—dust!

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Ritter, treue Schwesterliebe
Widmet euch diess herz;
Fordert keine andre Liebe
Denn es macht nir Schmerz.

Eurer Augen stilles weinen
Kann ich nicht ersehen.

THE fortnight of which the Prince and I spoke so lightly is gone by! I am sitting alone in my desolate chamber. A letter of many pages is in my hand; the writing is that of my dearly loved and noble-hearted brother. It is characteristically buoyant-looking and bold, yet delicate withal, and finely, though rapidly executed. In imagination I once more grasp the hand that wrote it, and I feel upon my breast the throbbing of as true a heart as ever beat. But I break from my reverie and read:

"To the Lord Hastings at Oxford, these; haste, post haste.

"My dear Brother,

"As regards the chief business that I came upon, I have sped prosperously beyond my hopes. I was only once obliged to use my pass, and Bryan was only *once* taken prisoner on the road. I need scarcely tell you that he escaped; and I actually found him here before me. Wherefore I was

welcomed with blazing bonfires, and happy looks, and loud greetings, and good cheer. I need not now talk of some saddened faces that came, while they welcomed my return, to inquire how those died who shall return to them no more; and how earnestly they listened to each almost forgotten word or deed relating to their dead that I could then recall.

"Well—I shook hands with all the good old yeomen, and most of their dames and pretty daughters, and we all tried to be as gay as if my father, of whom we in truth were thinking, was there amongst us still. In truth, it was something of a saddening joy; and the very day looked dark, and the old house seemed grown gray without, and awful sorts of echoes have established themselves within. With all the joy of finding myself once more under our ancestral roof, and so near Phoebe, it was the saddest night I ever passed since that terrible time when——

"But to return to my story. Morning came, and brought brighter thoughts and prospects. When I descended to the hall, I found it full of our friendly farmers; and the terrace, and the stone steps all were crowded with honest loyal faces. Oh, Heaven! what a pure and exalted happiness it would be to live in peace amongst a happy and a grateful tenantry, employed in the Divine work of improving and softening their rugged natures, with only the Divine reward of a self-approving and unproving conscience. Well! that blessed time *may* come, and 'Our King may enjoy his own again,' as the song says; and as he no doubt will, when the King of kings sees fit.

"I need not tell you that my first look was directed toward the Castle; there all seemed unchanged; and I learned that the family had returned safely, and that Sir Janus was doing well. I then found leisure to harangue our tenants. I told them what honor you had won; how bravely their brethren had fought under the King's honored standard, and I confessed to them that both officers and men were sorely in want of money.

"At once I saw fifty hands thrust into doublet and jerkin pockets, and though several came out empty, many were well-filled. The poor fellows said nothing; their honest hearts seemed too full of generous impulse to talk about it; but they struggled almost fiercely to the oak table in the hall, and clapped down their handfuls of hard-earned coin with a vehemence that made it ring. Meanwhile there was loud talking and many whispers, and several young men speeded off toward the village.

"Having finished my harangue, I mixed among the people, making inquiries and receiving kind wishes on all sides. Bryan had possessed himself of pen, ink, and paper, at the buttery hatch, and was quietly entering the names of each of the contributors: they seemed quite satisfied, when a nod informed them that their name was down; they appeared to make no account of the sums that were to stand opposite to it.

"At length I entered the house in order to break my fast, and had scarcely done so when I was disturbed by the sound of armed men. Hastening to the window, I recognized with joy and pride some hundreds of our young yeomen, each as well mounted and equipped as those that followed me hence a year ago, and the whole far better disciplined. I was so moved at this unex-

pected proof of loyalty and devotion to our cause, that my voice faltered when I attempted to address them. But it mattered not, for gallant cheers and well-blown trumpets would have drowned the voice of Stentor.

"Let me know with speed whether you will accept the services of these good men. If they be vital to the King's cause, let them march away in the name of righteousness; but if not absolutely wanted, oh let them still remain in their happy homes! they have well earned a right to do so by their prompt readiness to leave them. A year ago I should have asked no question, but which was the shortest road?—

* * * *

"9 P.M.—I had intended to dispatch this letter to-night by a trusty post, but there is now no need of haste. I find the Roundheads have been making a foray in the adjoining hamlets, even so near as Woolston. Under these circumstances, the men ought not to be taken from hence, however willing they may be to go. They tell me also that the Roundheads have established a strong post only nine miles from here, and that they threaten destruction to all relating to our malignant family.

"For the tenantry, I shall leave them to compound or not, as they please; but well I know that you will agree with me that this old and honored house shall never be polluted by a rebel's foot, whilst one of our name remains to defend it, or perish in its ruins. If they come in great force, doubtless it will be difficult to defend so wide a compass with so scant a garrison; but we have brave examples, even in this war, of what a few stout hearts can do in defending their home. With the old servants of the house, the foresters and others, I can muster about thirty fighting men. Arms there are in plenty, and provisions there will be before morning. Ammunition alone we are rather scant in.

"To the volunteer troop, of which I spoke this morning, I have given no fighting orders; I have even recommended them to compound with the Roundheads, as they are a mere isolated force, without support in these parts, and must soon fall into the enemy's hands. If any of them, however, were without homes or families, and bent on fighting, I told them that they should find a welcome amongst our little garrison at the Hall.

* * * *

"I have been to the Castle, and I have seen Phoebe. Eager as I was, I went thither on foot, and often lingered on the way by spots that spoke eloquently to my recollection. In our childhood nature seems closely interwoven with our sympathies, and long, long afterward some once-loved flower may gladden the dimmed eye, some scented breeze will bring back boyish color to the weather-beaten cheek. So I found at least. Memories rose up around me at every step. Every wild flower seemed, like those in Eastern gardens, to convey a meaning—a message from the invisible world, where the soul of dreamers oftentimes wanders truant from the body; and even then, as I pressed up the steep hill's side, my soul felt solemn, if not sad, while my thoughtless heart bounded with mere animal joy.

* * * *

"I entered the long terrace where the beechen bower was trained into shape by our boyish hands; I felt sure that Phoebe was hidden there; yet scarcely hidden, for I could soon trace the

shadow of a form, resting motionless, when the sea-breeze sets all the smaller shadows dancing. As I approached, I saw that she was sleeping, or rather tranced in the soft lassitude of the warm noon. Her eyelids and long lashes drooped languidly, but ever and anon a heart-struggling sigh seemed to prove that her soul was as little in harmony with its shrine as mine was. A letter was in her hand, half crushed, but open, so that I could have read it. I scarcely breathed for fear of disturbing that beautiful repose; it was a pleasure to linger there, and think that even so, if my life were crushed out of me in one of these wild broils, my disembodied spirit might still be allowed thus to gaze upon and watch over her.

"At length a gust of wind came rushing up from the sea; it murmured through the distant woods, and roared among the turrets of the castle; then swooping, seemed to dive beneath the beechen branches, and flung a rich and wavy tress of Phoebe's disheveled hair across her bosom. She started as if conscious that some one had been watching her, hastily thrust the letter within her bodice, and then looked timidly all round. I moved gently forward, and caught her eye; she shrieked as if in pain, and then turned from me, hiding her face in her clasped hands.

* * * * *

"When we were quietly seated side by side once more, where we had been used to meet for so many years, she grew quite calm.

"I ought to have guessed that you were come," she said, "for we saw the bonfires blazing round the hall, and crowds of people standing there. But my poor father has forbidden all communication even with your side of the river, and I thought those rejoicings might be only in honor of some loyal victory. I expected, I ought to say, I hoped, never to have seen you until peace was restored; and indeed I scarcely thought it possible that Hugo Hastings would have left the standard of his King to spy out the retreat of a poor country girl."

"I started with surprise at these words. It is true that the last were spoken with something of her old, merry manner, but they jarred upon my ear. I told her as coldly as I could tell her anything, that my duty had brought me home, and that only for a few days. That if her wish was indeed not to see me, that wish should be obeyed; but that I little expected to hear reproachful words from her, and in such a spot; a spot sacred to the best happiness and hope that I had ever known. She seemed touched, and laying her hand upon my arm, said, soothingly:

"Forgive me, Hugo; my trials have made me very wayward, and yet I sometimes forget advancing years, and fancy you are still my brother, as you used to be."

"As she spoke, her eyes filled with tears, and she turned them toward the sea, with a fond but unconscious gaze. A dark suspicion, a most desolate feeling then seized my heart; her love was not mine; she was lost to me, and if to me, then to herself! Heaven is my witness, that even in those moments of agony I felt more for her than for myself—for her stained truth, her lost honor, her deceitfulness. Oh! I loved her far too well for anger—for reproach; yet I know not which way to turn—how to escape to solitude and

silence, much less how to speak: it was surely Digby's letter that she treasured!

"And as I stood, thus racked with torturing doubts, she still gazed calmly on the distant sea, forgetting my very presence in the visionary thought that she had conjured up and gloated on. After a fierce struggle with a selfish fiend, I seemed to conquer. Suddenly the sharp pangs that had wrung my heart were soothed; a veil seemed to fall from my eyes, and I saw, before me only the dear, sainted sister of my childhood. I saw her exposed to evil and trying times—motherless and almost friendless, sent to encounter the temptations of the world. Her surpassing beauty, her guileless innocence, her vivid fancy—all so many baits to lure the spoiler. Her dread of the new doctrines made her shrink from the stern communion of the Puritan, and her father's fears had banished the old chaplain from his precious charge. And thus she was indeed alone and lost. Lost to me at least, for with that air of solemn sadness, that seraphic countenance, she could not be guilty.

"That conviction overcame me with a pleasure that momentarily banished all my pain; I sank upon my knee and prayed, gratefully, hopefully, and resignedly. Her ears caught her murmured name; she turned, she lifted up her voice and wept; she knelt beside me.

* * * * *

"As I strode away from the castle, down among the dark woods, where the waterfall shone white and ghost-like in the moonlight, I scarce could recognize in myself the same being who, buoyant, climbed those heights a few hours before. A whirlwind had, as it were, swept through my soul, bearing away all the glad hopes and trifling fancies that once were nurtured there, dancing like motes in its sunshine. All these were gone; and instead, a profoundly calm sensation seemed to reign there, joyless, but firm and self-supporting. The alarm bell that had interrupted our interview was still tolling vehemently from the belfry in our old home. I knew its purport well, and I knew that a stern fight must soon follow. But I heard it without emotion, as if it and all else were things of course; life and death appeared of very little consequence. My whole thoughts were occupied with the mystery of woman's nature—so like, yet so unlike to our own.

"She had told me all; she confessed to me that she loved me with more than a sister's love, yet only as a sister loves. But her heart's passion was for another, differing from me, she said, as darkness from the light; dark and dissembling, though daring too—of much evil repute, and even perhaps inconstant—yet—how dear!

* * * * *

"I found myself at home, without knowing how I came there, and I awakened suddenly to a sense of responsibility and duty. The hall had been hastily barricaded; self-appointed sentries patrolled the walls; half a score of hard-riden horses were held by a yeoman trooper at the door, and two wounded men lay stretched within the hall, having their wounds bound up. A few words informed me of what had passed: a reconnoitering party of rebel horse had been observed approaching our house. Our troop had turned out to repel them; the alarm-bell was rung, and the hall put in a state of defense. Our yeomen had



utterly routed the rebels, and pursued them as far as the moor, where they encountered a considerable force, and were repelled in turn. They learned from some prisoners that Beaumanoir was to be attacked the next morning.

"My measures were soon taken. I endeavored to think with your heart, if not with your head, and I determined at all risks to defend our home. I peremptorily dismissed the greater part of the troops, for whom I had indeed no ammunition. I commahded them to make the best terms they could with the invaders, and with such advice and thanks as I could express, I bade them all farewell. Some twenty I permitted to remain. I have thus a garrison of fifty, with four falconets, and ammunition sufficient for some hours. Just as I had completed all my preparations, the old chaplain of the castle came in.

"You know that since the Roundheads have waxed strong in this country, Sir Janus has requested him to absent himself altogether; and since then the poor old man has lived as he best could amongst our farmers. He was most welcome to me in every way. His presence seemed to sanctify our cause: a brave spirit shone in his eyes; and his voice, while it spoke of another world to which we were all approaching, talked cheerfully of the duty that yet remained to be done in this. I promise you, my brother, that our eve of battle has been spent in no noisy reveling; and that whatever report you hear, you will not have cause to blush for us as Christians or as soldiers.

* * * * *

"It is now midnight: I am about to make up this long letter, in order that the bearer may be safely out of the Hall before our enemies surround us. I wanted to send Bryan, but he refused flatly. The messenger brings such moneys as he could conveniently carry. He will remain hidden in the woods until the fate of to-morrow's fight is decided; if it goes against us, he will depart alone; if we succeed, he will be soon followed by yours in life and death,

"Hugo.

"P. S. Written at day-break. The enemy are advancing in two divisions: one in close column along the covered way; the other loosely scattered through the wood. I have at length prevailed on the old Chaplain to leave us for Phœbe's sake. I convinced him that she required his care now more than we did. He has done for us all that his high office (as I indeed feel it to be) can perform; henceforth we must work without ceasing. The enemy have heavy artillery with them and no provisions: it will be the affair of a few hours. Farewell."

So Hugo's letter ended.

CHAPTER XXIX.

How died he? Death to life is crown or blame.
SAMPHON AGONISTES.

I'll chant thine elegy with trumpet sounds,
And carve thine epitaph with bloody wounds.
MONTROSE.

I LAID down the letter. But an hour before, as I had been sitting alone, my mind oppressed with foreboding thoughts, Bryan had knocked softly at my door, and entered timidly. His face was pale

as death, and careworn, as if years had passed over him since last we met. He did not speak; he did not even look me in the face; but as he sought about his person for this letter, his large cloak fell off, and disclosed a dress so torn and scorched, and clotted with thick blood, as to be scarcely recognizable. At length he produced the packet, and handed it to me in silence.

I felt a spasm at my heart. I saw that all was over, and I prepared to set myself to my mournful task. As soon as I could command my voice, I said to him,

"I am sure you have done faithfully and well; leave me alone and refresh yourself, then return and tell me all."

He seized my offered hand in both of his and pressed it fervently, but he shed not a single tear, and he spoke not a word, as he retired and left me to my task.

When I had finished and he returned, he thus told his story.

"Sir Hugo finished that letter, and bid me once more take it to you: but I knew that he was too noble and generous to insist upon a poor fellow's disgracing himself, so I refused, and he then laid his commands on Richard Hurd, who had his sword-arm shot off in the beginning of the war. I was obliged to hurry him out of the castle; and it was much as he could do, with all his cunning, to get clear of the enemy, for they now came pouring round the old hall like water. Sir Hugo would let no man blow a match or draw a trigger until he demanded, in all form of war, why they came thus armed against a peaceful household.

"The parley was short. The rebels swore solemnly they would not spare a single soul alive if the house was not instantly surrendered; and not Sir Hugo's voice alone, but that of fifty gallant fellows with him, shouted back a scornful defiance to such summons. Then the trumpet retired, and the moment his white flag disappeared, out spoke their heavy guns—five of them—all well placed and served, and the stout old hall shook all over, but only as if it was rousing itself; for the next moment our falconets opened fire from the keep, and the best marksmen began to fire slow, but sure, and in a few minutes the enemy's fire slackened.

"This lull did not last long however; for while three of their culverins kept up a fire as before, two others were wheeled round under cover and ranged opposite to the great gate. There is no denying it, the Roundheads stood to their work like men, and never flinched under as hot a fire as fifty pieces ever dealt out with right good-will. They were in great force too; and the day was calm and heavy, and the smoke soon hid every object from our eyes, so that we had orders to cease firing and spare ammunition. Then the great guns opened on the gate, and the round shot came crashing in; but there was such a pile of barricades behind, that it only gave way slowly, and the court-yard was filled with splinters before there was a passage for a single man.

"Well! the enemy fought for that one passage as if it was the gate of heaven, and I hope some found it so, for many a stout fellow died there. And still they came on, and still our marksmen struck them down from the loop-holes, and the few that reached the gate fell by Sir Hugo's hand, and the three or four that stood near him.

It was wonderful to see him; so fierce against the enemy; at the same moment that he had gentle and kind words for us; and as quick an eye to mark a brave deed within, as to watch the danger from without. We fought, I scarce know how, but not a hand was idle, for two full hours without a moment's pause, and then there was a few minutes breathing time, broken by a louder discharge of artillery than ever, for now the Roundheads had got their five great guns all in position right opposite the gate.

"The last splinter of the barricades was soon gone, and a storm against the gate was then made by a forlorn of three or four hundred men. We dropped a man for every bullet as they came, but you hardly missed them. On came the column, bearing down our defense by sheer weight as they encumbered our pikes with their dead bodies. So they won the entrance hall, and we fought it foot by foot against them; Sir Hugo, ever last to be beaten back, and so calm and destructive all the while!

"We made a good stand in the long gallery, but our men were getting faint, and not a third of them were still alive; those that were wounded still made the most of their last strength to stab the enemy that went charging and trampling over them. Oh! there was many a terrible cry rang through the old house that day, but not one for mercy, except to Heaven.

"At last we were beaten back out of the gallery where the dead lay thick. By this time, the enemy was in possession everywhere, and Sir Hugo whispered me to make for the private sally-port that opened on the moat. So we fell back slowly, still fighting hand to hand, and foot to foot; and Sir Hugo was still calm as marble, only when passing the door of your father's old sleeping room, he cast one look upon it—so bright and happy—as if he saw him there once more welcoming him. At last we reached the turn down to the postern, and Sir Hugo said to me: 'Now do my bidding—lead these few brave fellows that are left, to the gate, and show them where to swim the moat. I will keep this narrow passage till you close the gate. God bless you, friend—farewell, and give my love to my dear brother.'

Bryan here faltered in his narrative, and to save his feelings, I exclaimed: "And you obeyed, and left him."

"Leave him!" he exclaimed; "You know I did not.—I told him I had forgotten the way of the bolt, and that we should all be lost if he didn't open the door himself; and as he was too wise to stand debating there, he left me,—Heaven be praised!—to keep the pass while he opened the little gate, and let out the men."

"Meanwhile I fought with the strength, because I had the pride, of a dozen men in me; and with the corner, and my sword broken short, I had greatly the advantage of their long pikes. But my heart failed me when I heard a foot behind me, and I was thrust aside, and there was Sir Hugo, as he had been for the last hour, breast to breast with the pikemen. Just then a loud voice shouted:

"Front rank, kneel!"—the three pikemen in front of us dropt down, and a pistol ball came whistling by. Sir Hugo fell—yes, he fell. But if you had seen the blessed smile he turned upon me, you would not, if you could, recall him there before you, to the proudest hour of his life. I

snatched his brave body—I don't know what strength I had—and, before the pikemen had recovered themselves, I had carried him out upon the step behind the postern and swung the gate to against the enemy, and barred it with my broken sword. I then tried to raise his head—but he was dead—entirely at rest. So suddenly—so still—while the cries of hell were raging round, and the home of his father was burning over his head!

* * * * *

"I swam the moat unheeded, for the flames were now blazing high, and the plunderers were struggling to quench them, not only for the plunderer's sake, but for their own lives. There were plenty of them to do it; and, to give the devil his due, they were well commanded; so, before I reached the wood, the fire gave way to thick smoke, and when I came away, the old Hall looked in the distance almost as usual—except the wing where the family used to live; the roof-tree was gone, the doors and windows burnt away, and only their black marks remaining on the walls.

"I found Richard Hurd at the place appointed; daring as he was, his heart seemed gone from him when he saw the old hall blaze up.

"It's all over with the cause," said he, "and I'll find my way to the sea, and beg my way to foreign parts, for England is England no longer."

"He had buried the money under the tree, and was going to bury the letter there too; for, he said, he could never bear to see your honor, and to break your heart with the story. So I bid him go his ways, and I went mine, disguised with a Roundhead's arms and his orange scarf, and begging my way as a wounded soldier. This made people keep clear of me; and at last I found a rebel trooper's horse tied to the door of an alehouse; I thought it would just suit my armor, and I rode away upon it to Newark; and so on through one chance and another to this spot, without sleep but what I found in the saddle."

Thus ended the story of my brother's fate. Since then I have been an altered man. The war that I loathed has become my great interest; my heart is wrapped up in it. I love fighting for its own fierce sake, and my name has become a terror to the enemy. I seem to bear a charmed life; bullets glance from my armor, swords wielded by the stoutest arm give way before the sweep of mine, and my vengeful war-cry finds no return. All things seem possible to me in battle; I chafe only because there is so little to be done, and that little seems such child's play.

At the storm of Bristol I led the forlorn. As we rushed along, I heard the death-cry of half my party. We bounded over the fallen stones, and won the breach. A new parapet had been raised within, and my stormers recoiled from the steady line of fire, and the palisado of pikes that defended it. That was a moment of high excitement, and it carried me through. I rushed at the parapet to leap it, but a halberd thrust me back without a wound. The halberdier endeavored to regain his weapon; I clung to it, and so was helped over by the enemy. My comrades followed bravely, and the parapet was won.*

* A similar case is related in Campden, of Edward Stanley, at Lutten, in 1580: he mounted on his enemy's pike and won the town.

It is, God wot! not with vanity, but with shame, that I record these reckless acts. A mere animal, if goaded with half my inward pain, might have done as much. Never shall I forget the self-reproach, the rebuke that I felt, when soon after, in the fight, or rather the pursuit, on Auburn Chace, the Prince rode up to me, and laying his hand upon my arm, exclaimed, "Enough—remember you are not a mere trooper." It was perhaps the only time that Rupert ever attempted to restrain an officer in battle.

CHAPTER XXX.

What joy can human things to us afford,
When we see perish thus, by sad events,
Ill men and bloody accidents,
The best cause, and best man that ever drew a sword.
COWLEY.

On the evening of that day we lay at Newburg; the enemy were strongly posted on an adjoining heath. At night Falkland proposed to me to visit the outposts with him, and as we had been lately somewhat estranged, I accepted his invitation with pleasure. His reserved and almost mournful temper was suited well with mine, and for some time we walked along in contented silence.

It was toward the end of September. A soft and mellow starlight suffused the sky. The night was so profoundly still, that we could hear the various hum of life on either hand, as we passed along the line of sentinels between the quarters of friend and foe. Now faint snatches of carousing songs, and now some strain of hymn-like music stole upon the ear; the clank of the armorer's forge, the neighing of horses, and the measured tramp of the patrols, were all by turns faintly audible; but they only served to render more profound the intervals of silence.

Falkland was the first to speak:—"How exquisite," said he, "is the contrast between the wild, maddening work of war, and the deep religious rest that now spreads around us and above. Rest! how much happiness is concentrated in that delicious word! Methinks it is almost a pleasant creed which the schoolmen preach, that our disembodied spirits shall repose after their life-long human travail, before they enter on the more active blessedness of heaven. I have passed the last hour with Jeremy Taylor, who has been preaching to me from that happy text, 'There is a rest for the people of God;' when the stain of sin may be wiped from our souls even as that of blood from our bright swords. I feel happier than I have done since these troubles began; I feel a certainty that my end is near."

"I would not argue with you," said I, "against an impression that gives you so much pleasure; I would rather participate with you in your solemn hope."

"And yet," said Falkland, "you have, humanly speaking, much to live for. You have youth, and health, and an honored name, that, come to our cause what will, may win you prosperous days in some happier land. Above all, if what I hear be true, you are happy in the love of one who might make a blessing of this mortal life. Yes," he continued in a tone of mild reproach, "when once, long ago, I ventured to lay open my heart to you, you were not candid with me."

"Because I felt that I had no right to be so,"

I replied; "and even now I cannot imagine any grounds that you can have for asserting what I do not myself dare to believe."

"I will tell you," resumed Falkland. "This is the last time that we shall be together, I feel well assured; and I have no desire for concealment, especially as I may unconsciously have wronged you. You know that mysterious man whom they call Hezekiah: of his personal history I have no right to speak, for his dreadful secret is his own; but of his relations with one whom I now hope you may one day possess, I mean to make no secret. I have already told you how I first became acquainted with this man. He was grateful to me, as far as gratitude was compatible with the stronger impulses of his nature. With an eye which nothing escapes, he perceived the more than interest that I took in the person of whom we spoke. He dared to tell me of it, and to reproach me with it as a sin. I never felt as if such pure and purifying thoughts as I cherished toward her *could* be sin; but, perhaps they were so.

"In the course of my vain efforts to obtain a treaty with the Puritans, I often saw this man. Under my pass, and in disguise, he frequently visited Oxford. After your expedition with Lady d'Aubigny, he came to me about the plot, to compromise for the life of that wretched Waller. I spoke to him of his young patroness, and his manner changed: he said vehemently that he himself had been infatuated by her—he called himself unworthy—a broken branch. He proceeded to relate to me what happened at Reading, and in short, he told me all that you doubtless remember full well about your prison interview."

"And will she marry Hastings?" I inquired. "Never," he replied, triumphantly. "When I reproached her with preferring her own passion to the interests of her cause and her faith, she replied proudly that I was presumptuous. That if she could not control her emotions, she was at least mistress of her actions, and could and would afford a life-long proof of her devotion to the cause."

"I have now told you all I know. I do not believe in such determinations as she expressed; I do believe that they will vanish with their temporary motive, especially if she ever discovers, what doubtless you are well aware of, that this Hezekiah himself loves her—perhaps unconsciously—but with all the consuming force of his ardent nature. Those are mistaken who assert that two great passions are incompatible in the same breast; nay, they rage the more fiercely from their contact."

This speech, that was meant to soothe, alarmed me. The mention of this Puritan, too, was almost as distasteful to me as his presence. Every man, I presume, is haunted by some other who is sure to encounter him at every trying juncture of his life, and Hezekiah seemed the incarnation of my evil destiny. I replied to Falkland with some asperity, I fear, for he rejoined in a more determined tone:

"No, the influence that this man possesses has not been obtained by unlawful arts. His is simply the power that strong minds (which are few) possess over weaker ones (which are many). And then he has the supernatural stimulus that high and sustained enthusiasm imparts to his natural great gifts; nay, even a slight gleam of

insanity is turned to good account among the various elements that compose his character. He is most unlike what I am in every respect; he seems made for, if not by, these times that are destroying me; wasting my heart away, until every hope I once held is merged in a longing for peace—peace—peace!”

The manner in which this wise and good man pronounced that word was profoundly touching: the echo of them seemed to linger on the midnight; and long after the lips that uttered them were cold, fancy brought back their sound. The word Peace, I hope and believe, might be carved upon his tomb, as his best epitaph.

I did not dare to interrupt his reverie, but it was soon broken by a messenger from the King: he came in hot haste to seek Lord Falkland.

“Farewell!” said he, extending his hand and smiling a most sad sweet smile, “you see the Secretary for War cannot be long spared!”

He turned to depart, and I saw him no more, until, to use his own prophetic words, “he was out of his misery,” and lay at rest upon the field of honor.

I wandered forward alone, pondering on the last words of this gifted, but eccentric man. So absorbed was I in thought, that the gradual silence stealing over the hostile armies seemed sudden to me, when, at length, I became conscious of it. The stillness of the heavens appeared to have come down like dew upon the earth.

Amongst all the various sights that strike upon the sense or the imagination, there is none more memorable than that of a sleeping army, relaxed in the deep and charmed slumber that precedes its hour of fierce and supernatural trial and excitement. The grim veteran, the home-dreaming boy are there, side by side, with death-dealing weapons for a pillow; breathing heavily in deep unconscious enjoyment of their roofless rest. Even the poor horses have bowed their gallant heads, and forgotten to feed upon the scanty herbage. * * *

A faint streak of light is visible upon the distant hills: some anxious eye has been watching for it, and suddenly, as the sound of the cannon follows upon its flash, rings the blast of a trumpet in answer to the dawn. The sleeping posts start into life; drums rattle forth the *revêillé*; standards are unfurled; and man, the innocent sleeper, is roused to his work of slaughter.

Returning hastily to my quarters, I found a glad surprise awaiting me. My cousin, Harry Hotspur, was there, just risen from my bed, and in the act of emptying his morning draught. He called it his first, but he would have found some difficulty in defining what was his last.

“Welcome, welcome, my gallant kinsman!” he exclaimed; “luck for once is favorable to me. I only got to Oxford yesterday, about some affairs with those idle rascals they call men of business. I heard that the King was likely to be here, with good chances of a battle, so I flung my business to the devil, and rode over to have a hand in the brave sport. The blessing of the Church crowned my knight errantry, for I found a reverend divine inquiring his way to meet you, and not sorry to have my escort. He is a sorrowful but a brave old man, and I fear me has no pleasant tidings for your ear. Now take my advice and let us do battle first, and if we live, you will have time to listen to him; and if not—

why there’s no reason we should cloud our brows under this bright world’s last sunshine.”

It was the old chaplain of the castle. I followed my cousin’s advice, not because I was afraid of any tidings he could bring, but because, wearied with long travel, he was now sleeping, and I would not waken him. The trumpets had already sounded to horse, and my cousin and I hastened to our post. My troop had become a mere skeleton of some five-and-twenty men, and was incorporated into Prince Rupert’s regiment. I had mounted my cousin on his old friend Satan, and he was in high spirits as he rode in among his former comrades, giving and receiving warm greetings from them all.

He was the very type of a Cavalier, as that character will go down to history, because such as he formed the most prominent, if not the most numerous class; chivalrous, joyous, and generous; full, nevertheless, of all those faults that enemies find easiest to denounce, and friends to forgive. He now roused up my spirits to a better pitch, and may thus, perhaps, have preserved my life on that fatal day. Henceforward we were comrades together, and out of our two characters, apparently so dissonant, we somehow or other made an almost perfect harmony.

The battle of Newbury was fought with the finest material and the worst conduct of any throughout the war; but I am not now about to enter into its details. Penmen and lords-in-waiting laid out the array, and soldiers had to extricate the army from its difficulties as best they might. Our artillery scarcely sent a shot among the enemy throughout the day; cavalry had the posts of infantry, and foot were obliged to do duty as horsemen and dragons. Since the destruction of the greater part of my own troop had transferred the remainder into the Prince’s regiment, I had fought among them merely as a volunteer. For many reasons I had always refused a command, and I now rode with Harry Hotspur along the lines in the King’s train.

“A good many friends are missing there,” exclaimed my cousin, pointing to Byron’s regiment. “But here’s my Lord Falkland, trim and gallant as a bridegroom, as if he had dressed his ruffles and his smiles for the occasion. And there, by Jove! is that traitor Holland, looking as blandly loyal, as if he was a gentleman. I would give all the plunder of yonder rebels that he were in their ranks, and I within sword’s length of him this day. There goes Sunderland, a true Cavalier, though he has some womanish notions about wine, *et cetera*; and there, the good Carnarvon, a modern crusader, and a right noble gentleman. There is Goring, too, looking as careless as if he were going to lead off a dance, and not a charge;—by my faith, it will be a dance of death. There’s our king of comedy, Mohun, too, turned soldier, instead of player, and about to practice tragedy. And old Allen, of the cockpit, and Master Hart and Robinson, a whole troop—”

My cousin’s speech was broken off by a sudden and disorderly advance, which scarcely left us time to resume our places. Old Blount was near me, as my covering man; Bryan now rode proudly as an esquire, and was a candidate for knighthood.

We got into action as best we could; we fought as best we might. Never had I seen so bloody a day, and yet when evening fell none



could tell who was the winner. There was, however, no doubt as to the greatest loser; Falkland fell, and with him the flower of the King's chivalry, noble and gentle. It was a never to be forgotten sight, when that gallant brotherhood was brought together to be buried. Three friends lay together, side by side, on one black banner taken from the enemy—Falkland, Sunderland, Carnarvon—their plumed helmets at their feet, their hands crossed in Crusader fashion on their breasts. And so one grave received them. They had a King for their chief mourner, and the Author of "Holy Dying" to minister their funeral rite.

CHAPTER XXXI.

How now? ye secret, black, and midnight hags—
What is't ye do?

A deed without a name.

SHAKESPEARE.

My personal recollections of this battle are very vivid, and, to me, memorable. I have already mentioned that the skeleton of my troop was regimented with Prince Rupert's, but his regiment was itself become a skeleton. Three times he led us through a shattering fire of artillery against the City train-bands, and as often were we flung backward from their palisades of pikes, or perished under their fire; more than one half of his brave regiment fell before the sun was high. After that, finding it impossible to rally them again, he rode away to the foot, to endeavor with them to retrieve the day; by that time the whole field was in a general *mêlée*, as far as the cavalry was concerned. The foot, however, stood firmly together on either side, exchanging hot musket fire, as from so many fortifications, while the horse fought, each man where he could soonest find an enemy. My yeomen, indeed, kept close to me, and I strove to apply their strength where it was most needed; but with scarcely a dozen men, I might almost as well have fought alone.

Hotspur had been summoned to accompany the Prince; I had been left to rally what men I could, and strange to say, I felt quite lonely on that crowded field. Bryan had fallen wounded in the first charge; my cornet had been slain by my side; my yeomen were dispersed with their wearied and now useless horses, and Blount alone remained to me. That faithful servant seemed to forget his own existence in watching over mine. When I was struggling and trampling among fierce enemies, there was he parrying the same weapon, and almost dealing the same strokes. When I had stopped to breathe my horse, or been abandoned by the Roundheads for some easier opponent, there was Blount, too, quiet and observant; wiping his huge moustache, it might be, with his well-worn gauntlet, or arranging some strap about me that had been disordered.

It was during some such momentary pause that Goring came sweeping by, his horse all foam, and maddened with many a wound; but he himself calm and collected.

"Hal loiterers!" he exclaimed, with an unimpassioned, but tremendous oath. "Is this a time for rest? Follow me as ye love honor and fear the Provo-Marshal."

I dashed forward, and found myself among some fifty troopers that the General had collected along the field. Robinson the player rode beside me.

"Great actor that!" he exclaimed, pointing to Goring as we galloped along. "Splendid he'd be as Joan of Arc in petticoats.* By Jove! if ever I get home, I'll astonish my old father with that look and attitude of his."

Almost without a blow, we cleared our way through the scattered masses of the enemy, and gradually increased our little force as we bore down upon the point where Goring's quick eye had observed the King's standard sorely beset. The royal guards stood bravely to their post, but the Roundhead artillery had just begun to play upon them, and a strong body of rebel horse was hovering near to dash in upon the gaps the iron shot should make. We were halted for a minute or two to breathe our horses, and heard Goring's clear, piercing voice, mingling brave words of cheer with ruffian blasphemies.

"Now, sons of England," he exclaimed, "charge home with me this once, and dash like d— on those crop-eared knaves."

He stooped to his charger's mane, bounded across the artillery's line of fire, and plunged into the opposite mass of Roundhead horse. As he did, so did we all, as if one man, and found ourselves hand-to-hand with Hazlerigg's own troopers, in as fierce a *mêlée* as ever hand and heart gave strength to. Though taken by surprise, they fought furiously; gradually our dense formations struggled into wider space, and separated into a hundred different and personal encounters. Just then my good steed fell, crushing my right leg under him, and Blount was in a moment by my side. Before he could disengage me, I heard a cry of agony from poor Robinson; his right hand had just been severed from his wrist, and he held up his maimed arm to a gigantic trooper, with a shrill prayer for quarter; but that trooper was the stern Harrison:

"Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord negligently," he exclaimed, as he clove the poor player's skull in two.†

Many such scenes were enacting round me—but through individual acts of valor, terror and despair, the spirit of conquest ruled for our side, and resulted in the Roundheads giving way; then Goring's trumpet sounded the recall, and such of us as were able obeyed and retired within our lines. Goring did not give time to observe the fearful loss we had sustained; with one word of commendation, he led us on again, horse and foot (for half of us had been unhorsed) round the hill-side, and so charged the artillery. We were too few to capture it, but we made them retire from their guns, and probably thus saved the day.

I know not what was doing elsewhere, but at length we were left unassailed by the enemy, and so rested on our arms, man and horse alike incapable of further offensive movements. I then had time to cast my eyes about me. Everywhere I beheld groups of dying men who had been withdrawn, or withdrawn themselves, out of the strife with which they were done forever.

* At this time no women were permitted on the stage; their parts were played by Robinson, Mohun, and others. Goring was of a rather delicate figure.

† History takes note of this episode, in the very words of our cavalier.

surgeons and their men, with bared arms and bloody shirts, were attending upon some; ministers of religion were bending over others, exercising their healing office upon the souls of the departing.

I drew near to one of the latter groups; a noble form, all sheathed in armor, lay resting on a pile of heather; the face alone was bare and upturned to the sky, and all seemed still with him, except gushes of blood that bubbled up from the cuirass at every pulse-beat. So lay the beloved of many, the admired of all—the gallant, good Camarvon. And kneeling by his side, his white hair waving in the breeze, knelt Jeremy Taylor, the divine, pouring forth such heavenly and consoling prayer as brightened up the countenance of the dying man with thoughts that conquered agony.

As we stood round our happy comrade, Lord Jernyn, the Queen's favorite, rode up to him and hastily dismounted.

"Ah, my dear Lord," he exclaimed, "this is sad work; but we must get you round, we never could afford to lose such an ornament to court and camp." The courtier suddenly ceased, for he saw that the Angel of Death was already there, and even he was awed in his solemn presence; he was kind-hearted too, in his own way, and he bent over his friend and whispered softly:

"You have deserved well of the King; have you no wish or prayer that I can deliver for you?"

The dying man, without moving his eyes from a bright sunset spot among the clouds where they were fixed, replied faintly and firmly, "No—I have now no prayer but for the King of kings!" And with these grand words he died.

I remained silently there beside him for some time, and then rose sadly and slowly to seek among the wounded or perhaps the slain, for my faithful follower, Bryan.

The battle was now over; the troops on either side were retiring, and the trumpets on either side were sounding victory. All fighting men had withdrawn from the sanguinary and bootless field, and there remained only some weary friends to seek—and some savage suttler women to spoil—the dead.

Then were found Falkland and Sunderland, and they were laid beside their friend as I have described; then too was found many a slain father by his son, a brother by his brother, with heart-breaking grief that never found a voice, except in the humble homes made desolate. And cries of pain and half-suppressed moans of stout men in their agony, rose up from the blood-moistened grass all round me, far and near. And horses uttered hideous screams as they struggled to stand on broken limbs or gasped for breath through torn lungs.

As the shades of evening darkened down, the wrecks of warlike implements, as well as of those who lately wielded them, assumed an appearance of more mysterious horror. The full round harvest-moon glimmered on many a battered breast-plate, and cloven helmet and broken sword,—redly too, it shone reflected on many a pool of blood, and made dark shadows of the distorted or shapeless forms that were lately men.

And thus is glory won! And thus, after 1600

years of Christian grace, do Christians decide controversies concerning the common weal of their perishable bodies and immortal souls!

I leaned upon a broken gun-carriage, lost in contemplation of the scene before me, and still as one of the surrounding dead. I envied them; the meanest trooper there looked sublime and happy in repose, while the few forms that moved along the woeful field seemed condemned to life, haunting this penal world wearily. One of these forms was now approaching slowly and stealthily; a mist had risen from the dewy field, and rendered all shapes doubtful, and undefined, and ghost-like. As the figure drew near, however, I could hear its breath drawn hard as if through clinched teeth, and as it turned toward the light, I could see the glitter of the long knife or skene used by the camp followers.

My heart beat quick in spite of me, as this ill-omened figure glided on. Now stooping over one body and cutting from it some article that seemed of value, and now rolling aside another unconscious corpse in order to rifle it the more conveniently. I could by this time see that this creature was a woman—one of those lost ones who haunted every camp, corrupting the living and spoiling the dead bodies of the soldiery; it was also asserted, and I fear too truly, that their murderous-looking knives prevented many a wounded man's accusation. Horrid stories of such massacres rose up in my memory, as I pursued the hyena-like woman with fascinated eyes. She moved on rapidly, and just before I lost sight of her, my attention was attracted to another form of very different appearance.

A mounted trooper seemed to start from the ground, so silently had he approached me; his figure looked gigantic, relieved against the lighted sky and dilated by the mist. Long fasting and the reaction of excitement had made me absolutely nervous, as I watched the horseman advance; that desponding look, that drooping form—could it be Prince Rupert? or was it the spirit of that 'Son of Blood,' as our enemies called him, haunting the scenes of carnage that he was supposed to love? All the wild weird tales of apparitions seemed to me quite credible at such a time and place, and half in exorcism—endeavoring to break the spell that was gathering round me—I pronounced his name.

Flesh and blood it was, no doubt; for at once the right hand grasped the sword that had been hanging idly at the wrist, and the erewhile sad countenance lighted up into that calm fierceness which none but that of Rupert ever wore. A few words served to explain who I was, and my position there; I heard in return, that the Prince had been reconnoitering the enemy whom he had followed to their bivouac alone.

"I shall have them to-morrow," he muttered;—"ay, all to myself, without the babble or impertinence of a single scribe or courtier to spoil my work. Well!—enough for this night I confess to you, Hastings, that I feel grave; those, dead men have preached a solemn homily to me as I have been riding back alone. Surely this mysterious air seems full of the spirits that we have disembodied since the sun rose on them in life and health. And hark! by heavens, that scream thrills to my very marrow—let's on."

So saying the impetuous Prince rode off at speed in the direction that the woman had just taken. I followed, and in a few minutes I

found Rupert dismounted and in raging wrath; holding the woman at arms' length, whilst he wrathfully blew his well-known bugle call, that screamed wildly through the stillness, and echoed far away.

"Look there, Hastings," he cried, "how this she-fiend has served an honest soldier!"

I looked and saw Bryan, ghastly pale and crushed, with the handle of the accursed knife sticking in his shoulder; the blade had pierced his flesh, and pinned him to the ground beneath. I could scarcely withhold my own angry hand from the woman, who was shrieking out horrible imprecations on the Prince, on herself, and all the world.

"That idle, scoundrel, Provost-Marshal," exclaimed the Prince, between his teeth; "I told him a thousand times to look after these she-devils; and by heaven, if he is not here now, I'll hang him to the first tree whenever I can catch him."

But the Provost-Marshal *was* there; running at top speed to his stern master's well-known call, followed by half-a-dozen functionaries, well furnished with cords; each man also having a short sword by his side.

"Look there," cried the Prince, "if that lad dies, thou shalt answer for his death; for I lay it at thy door that our camp is not long since weeded of these hell-cats. Now hang me up this one; out of hand—at once—here—on this spot;" and he flung her from him. The Marshal's men attempted to seize the woman, but, practiced as they were, they found it no easy matter. She fought with savage fury and despair, uttering loud cries, "for mercy and a long day."

I had thrown myself down by Bryan's side: his fidelity, and courage, and self-devotion, had made him very dear to me, and since my poor brother's death, he had unconsciously crept closer into my affections. Though far spent, he knew me at once, and smiled gratefully for my care.

"Yes, draw it out quickly," he murmured, "it is only in the flesh, for she missed her blow with fright when she heard the horsemen coming. It's nothing worth mentioning—the pain—but, oh, to think that a woman, and an Irishwoman too—could murder a poor wounded fellow-countryman, and shed the blood of an O'Brian!"

As he spoke, the wretched woman burst with supernatural strength from the hands of the executioners, flung herself upon her knees by his side, and gazed with wild earnestness into his half-closed eyes.

"Mother Mary! Mother Mary!" she shrieked out, in heart-broken tones, "what have I done—what have I done—to murder my own child! Oh, what have I *not* done! but it's all paid back to me, if I had made the angels fall in this one minnet. Stand off!" she screamed to the men who were again approaching her, "and for your soul's sake listen to what I have to say—then do your worst, and sure hell 'ill be a rest to me."

The men, already awed by her despair, held back at a sign from the Prince; and the woman set up a long, loud cry for forgiveness that seemed to pierce through Bryan's brain, for he covered his eyes with his unwounded arm and shuddered deeply.

"Oh, bid her unsay that word," murmured the

poor fellow,—"*bid her not say that she is my mother; but save her life for my sake.*"

"Too thrue, too thrue, I am your mother;" sobbed out the miserable wretch; "too thrue, you sucked your first milk from this distracted breast. Oh, it was a fair one thin; my curses on it, and on every one but him that turned its warm blood to fire in my heart. Oh! that poor heart is brakin' now—but I must, must spake. O darlin' of my soul! when the Sassenach sogers burnt down the Castle Mohir, the night that you was born and your mother died, didn't I hide you in my bosom from fire, and the bullets, and the storm; and foster you my best, till the Sassenach Rufus deluded me, and led me away for one short hour, and I lost you? And didn't I thin roam the world thro' in search of you, till I heard you was throwned at say;—and haven't I striven to revenge you and myself ever since upon the murtherin Sassenach? (O! little many a swaggering soger knew when he was coortin' me, that my breath was his poison and my pillow his death.)—and now to find you here, after all I done to comfort and revenge you—to find you here bleeding under my own stroke!"

Bryan extended his feeble hand. "Then you are not my mother, my poor friend," he said, in a tremulous and gratified voice.

"Your *own* mother!" exclaimed the woman, "is it to be the Queen of Connaught and Turloughmore? No, no, my heart jewel, but I was your fosterer: and, I bless the Queen of Heaven now and evermore, amen, that I was let live to have my proud heart broken; for I am saved, I believe—ah—sure I'm saved."

And worn out with emotion and long habits of debauchery, she sank upon the ground senseless, and a stream of blood trickled from her pale lips.

During all this scene the Prince had been leaning on his horse's neck, regarding it with grave and deep interest: he now leaped into the saddle and spoke quickly:—

"Provost Marshal, forward; leave that carrion to the kites, and carry this wounded man carefully, as if he was my brother, to the town, and let him be as well looked too. Hastings, I cannot spare you: I hear the enemy astir. Get what men you can together, for in another hour we must march."

CHAPTER XXXII.

Which, when the pensive Ladie saw from farre,
Great woe and sorrow did her soul assay.
As weening that the sad end of the warre,
And 'gan to highest God entirely praye,
SPENSER'S "FAERIE QUEENE."

ON my return toward the town, I met Blount with half a score of my dismounted troopers; they had been searching for me all over the field in vain, and were now bending their steps in the direction whence they had heard Prince Rupert's bugle. In one respect, they had prospered by their vigilance; for, being first in the field, they had got hold of several good horses, which we wanted sadly. Above all, they had found poor Satan, who it appeared had been only stunned in the encounter, and was now looking as animated as ever, though seamed with many a scar.

As soon as I had seen Bryan well cared for, and been assured that his wounds were not dangerous, I left him to his rest, and mounted to my lodgings. There I found Hotspur, looking the very picture of contentment. He had flung one huge boot to one end of the room, the other on the bed; his doublet was loose, and he could scarcely keep his other garments together as he sprang up to welcome me. He had a large flagon of wine by his side, his pipe was in his mouth, and he took deep and long inspirations of the fragrant weed between every sentence that he uttered, when the first hasty and warm greeting was well over. I seized the flagon with eagerness—and how delicious was that cool, sparkling wine to my parched throat, as wave after wave went gurgling down! Blount's cautious care had provided food enough in the field, but liquor was less portable, and I had tasted none since morning. What a new life it gave, and seemed to bathe the very soul as well as body. Vigor and hope sprang up anew; care and anxiety were fairly drowned—blotted out from my brain—banished.

"Let's make the most of this quiet hour," drawled out Hotspur, luxuriously stretching himself along the wooden bench. "Beard of my fathers! what strange mortals are we! To think that I am lauding quiet as a blessing! There, fill your pipe, and tell us what the 'mad Prince' is up to now. His quarter-master Hussey has been round to every billet and stable to reckon how many men and horses are fit for the next slaughter—battle I mean. By the Rood, for once, I have had almost enough of it; and I care not who thou tellest it to, for no one will believe it. And what an unappeasable appetite for fight hast thou, my cousin. After hammering on Roundhead pots and haquetins like so many anvils all the day, thou comest not home like an honest workman in the evening; but prowlest about the field of battle like some beauty in a deserted banquet-room, musing, I presume, upon your conquests. And here's my poor old fellow-wayfarer, the Chaplain, has been waiting to catch a glimpse of thee during the last four-and-twenty hours; and now he's gone to seek thee among the wounded on that infernally ill-fought field of ours. Canst tell me, by the bye, who was the conqueror?"

"Why, the enemy are in retreat," said I.

"Ay," Hotspur returned, "that is to say they have resumed their march, and we're not able to prevent them. I'll be bound for it, however, our mad Prince intends to indulge himself in a little skirmishing with them before they part. He's a fine lion-hearted fellow, that Rupert—(was that a noise upon the stair?)—but if he gets me into the saddle this night again, I'm a—"

"Peer of the realm," interrupted the personage in question, as he entered the room. "Why, Hotspur, have I caught thee breeding a mutinous spirit of tranquillity? On with thy boots, man, and don thine armor; Harry Hastings of nowhere this day, and Lord Loughborough of Newbury, to-morrow. Wouldst thou have me ashamed of the only title our royal uncle has yet bestowed at my request?"

So saying, the indefatigable Prince took a deep swill of the oft-replenished flagon, and by the time he had finished his draught and laid down the cup, Hotspur was an altered man. He had started to his feet on the first entrance of his

Highness, and his fingers had been convulsively busy with his loops and points. By this time he was in full attire, and he now exclaimed, as he took down his well-tried sword from the mantel-piece: "May the bright honor of Plantagenet perish in my blood, if ever I have failed or shall fail thee, Prince, however my foolish tongue may wag; and there's my glove upon that oath."

"Enough," said the Prince, "I never doubted thee. I find the Roundheads are retiring; George Lisle and his musketeers are already on the move toward the narrow road that they must pass. We can muster about five hundred horse of all sorts, and in an hour we shall mount: till then we rest."

So saying, he threw himself, at full length, upon a wooden bench, his head sank upon his breast, and he was profoundly asleep almost as soon as he ceased to speak.

I will not weary my reader with any more fighting for the present. Enough to say we pursued Essex hotly, punished his rear-guard severely, and suffered not a little ourselves. Before noon, we had rejoined the main army of the King, now on its return to Oxford. There, at length, I found the good chaplain, who exhibited more emotion on seeing me, than I thought his calmed old age was capable of. Nor was this interview, though so long deferred, without deep interest to me: that good old man had seen almost the last of my brother; he had announced his untimely death to that brother's faithless mistress; he had witnessed how Zillah looked when she beheld the destruction of our home.

Deeply moved, as he was at first, when all these recollections came crowding on his memory, the old man's voice soon rose into the clear and mellow tones in which he had read, and preached, and prayed so long, that they had become quite natural to him. He described to me all that he had seen, and much that he had felt, with almost scriptural terseness and simplicity; and he concluded by informing me, that he had "sought me far and near without ceasing, for that Phoebe was wounded in spirit, and sick unto death, refusing to be comforted until she had obtained my pardon and forgiveness."

But this was not the only purport of his mission. He brought some considerable sums of money, voluntary gifts they might be called, from my poor harassed people, and some information that was far more valuable. The substance of his story was as follows: he began by giving an account of the family of the castle.

The night that Hugo had last seen them, they had retired to rest, expecting to be released, and to depart upon the morrow;—"but in the midst of the night, at the twelfth hour there came officers with a great company of spearmen, and bid them gird themselves up, and prepare straightway to set forth upon their journey; and when they would not, through fear, there came in upon them a misshapen dwarf, scarce two cubits high, who had a token for the Lady Zillah that she should depart; whereupon they departed, and in fine reached the castle in safety."

"And it was well; for in the morning there came an order to the Tower from certain avaricious men of the committee, that Sir Janus should be stayed until he should pay a great fine; but, behold, he was already fled. Then came an order that Sir Janus should furnish cattle, of which he had great store, and likewise horses

fit for war, of which he had very many; and that they should be given up to those who called themselves 'the chosen of Israel.' But Sir Janus, wise in his generation, had sent away all that were good for use or pleasant to the eye, into the wilderness, even the free country; and from the highway and commons he had bought and collected all the beasts, both horses and horned cattle, that were of little worth; and the former he had carefully tended in his stables with much clothing, and with the latter he filled his cowsheds and his pastures. And when the commissioners were come to receive the required creatures, lo! there were only weak colts and aged horses, and likewise of cattle only such as typified of old the seven famine years to Egypt. And the commissioners were very wroth, and they took not above half a score of the vile horses, and twice so many murrain cattle, whereof many of the soldiers partaking, became sick and died.*

"Likewise the Lady Demirov had been compelled to furnish a large store of fine linen and much cloth, in the preparation whereof she and her handmaidens had been busied many years; and the chiefs of the people took for themselves the fine linen; and of the broad-cloth garments were made for the lower parts of their followers.

"While things stood thus at the Castle, the forces of the people beleaguering Beaumanoir, and the Chaplain had been commanded and compelled to flee thence to the refuge of the Castle. And he obtained access there, being neither hindered nor receiving welcome; for Sir Janus had shut him up in his own chamber, and her Ladyship was busied with her handmaidens in laying out flax and woof anew for the spinning, even as a spider endeavoreth to renew her broken webs. But the young ladies were in the library as of old, and looking out with pale faces on the beleaguered mansion in the vale below, that had been of old so friendly and so dear to their childhood. And the elder maiden received the Chaplain kindly, and led him to her sister, who sat apart, buried in deep sorrow, and with much shamefacedness. And when he blessed her, she fell upon her knees, and hiding her fair face she told him all the sorrow, and, it may be, the sin of her young heart. And he strove to comfort her, but she would not; and as he spoke, lo! a loud discharge of artillery shook all the windows, and made the poor penitent start to her feet, and she gazed with terrific eyes on the havoc that had been begun, and on the battle. And the fire of muskets, and of great guns, came fast from the battlements of the old house in reply to them that besieged, but of the defenders none were visible save one, for they covered themselves behind the walls. But that one, (whom they knew to be Sir Hugo, from his tall white plume,) was always to be seen, as he moved about among his followers. Then the maiden whom he had loved hid her face once more and sobbed aloud.

"Father," she said to her old Chaplain; 'can it be that we have two souls within our one small heart? I have told thee, that I love another—Ah! too dearly! and yet, methinks, the love I bear that doomed and gallant youth is stronger still, though greatly differing. Oh! I

would give a thousand years of life for one brief moment—to throw myself on his breast and protect him with my own from the death that is hovering round him. If he could but hear me, I would say, and that most truly, all that the most loving heart could ever long to hear. And then—I know too, too well—his life would become dearer to him, and he would guard it for my sake and for that of happiness to come. Alas! never more—never more shall I hear his voice; never again shall I have a chance of ennobling my vile nature by communing with his noble spirit.'

"And with many such sorrowful words she spake, and I could not comfort her; but my tears, the dew of my heart's pity, fell fast from these aged eyes. Then suddenly, the artillery roared louder, and we could hear a mighty crash, and then a torrent of iron-clad men pressed on, yea, and into the old house; and the loud noise ceased, and only obscure and muffled sounds reached our ears, as the fight raged within, even to the death. Then a thick smoke arose, and flames burst forth, and lo! all was utterly silent, even as the silence of the grave.

"He is lost! he is lost!" exclaimed the hapless maiden at my knee. 'Well I know that he is lost! never would his high and gallant spirit survive the pollution of his father's home. He is lost! and has not left his match in all this base, dark world behind him.'

"After the space of an hour, it might be, the Lady Zillah rose hastily from her knees, for she had been rapt in prayer, even since the beginning of the strife. Yea, she arose and flung open the casement, and the young Irish lad leaped in from the branches, by the help of which he had clomb the wall. He looked like the spirit of flame and ruin; scorched, bruised and blood-stained, with direful tidings of that noble youth, which every eye could read upon his pale face and darkened brow.

"I have but a moment," said he, 'to do my dead master's bidding. To you, Lady,' he said to my poor pupil, who had shrank horror-stricken into the window's deep recess—'to you, Lady, Sir Hugo sent his last words. I need not speak them, even if I dared. To you, Reverend Sir, I bequeath the care of his remains, and of these moneys, which he received yesterday for my Lord. I would not be cumbered with them; I have, maybe, small chance of reaching Oxford in safety. Lady—' he continued, turning to Zillah with deep reverence, 'I return this night, if I survive it, to my Lord; may I have charge of any message to console him for this sad day?'

"Just then steps were heard along the gallery; he sprang to the window, but paused a little space for her reply. She motioned him away as the door opened, and the brave lad was gone."

The old man proceeded to say that his young pupil was long sick, almost to death; refusing to be comforted, and raving oftentimes of her lost "brother." That she had forsworn life and all that it could bring, and had implored her old chaplain to permit her to take the veil, promising that she would still be a true churchwoman in all else. But he forbid her to think of such a living suicide; he told her that the only true retirement was to be found in her own heart, and the only true discipline was that of a chastened spirit. And her sister likewise strove to soothe and counsel her with words that were passing

* A similar transaction was recorded in the journals of the time, as having taken place at Stoke Hall, near Mark.

sweet; and by that bed of sorrow, the Puritan sister and the old Churchman had found a sympathy and a bond of feeling that they had never known before.

After two days, the Roundhead forces, except a small garrison, had left Beaumanoir, and the old man had ventured to leave his pupil and go thither in search of Hugo's remains, in the hope of performing the Church rites over them and his fellow-sufferers. He had obtained easy admission to the house; some of the rebels had reviled, and others had pity on his sorrow and his gray hairs. But none could tell him where to find those whom he sought; the fire was supposed to have destroyed the defenders, with that which they had so well defended. He had then wandered to his favorite haunt in my father's lifetime, where the ancient records of our house were kept. He knocked at the door, and a deep voice, that he knew well, inquired who was there. He gave his name, and heard a hasty stride, and the door bolted from within. He heard that voice no more—but it was the voice of Hezekiah Doom.

His pupil regained strength slowly; at last, her frame, though not her mind, recovered from its shock. She spoke constantly of me, declaring that if she could once hear that I had pardoned her, she would feel happy. At length, her aged friend set out, and after long and painful travel, he had thus met with me.

CHAPTER XXII.

Tell fortune of her Mindnesse;
Tell nature of decay;
Tell friendship of unkindnesse;
Tell justice of delay.

SIR WALTER RALEIGH.

THE summer campaign was now over, and both armies were contented to retire for rest and repair. Oxford was become to me more distasteful than ever, and I resolved to leave it, since I could do so without reproach. My cousin Hastings, now Lord Loughborough, having accomplished his business, was urgent to depart for his garrisoned Castle of Ashby-de-la-Zouch; the old chaplain, too, was very anxious to return to his pupil, so I determined to take the escort of my cousin for him and for myself as far as Ashby, and then to proceed, if possible, to visit my ruined home. Bryan was still unable to be moved, but he was in high spirits, for the Prince had appointed him cornet and standard-bearer in his highness's own regiment. I furnished him with all suitable appointments, and left to his care and use my good steed Satan, being as unfit for work at present as the young cornet.

It was with a light heart, that having made these arrangements, I prepared to depart. The King granted me an audience to take leave, at which the Queen and Prince Rupert were present. His Majesty was very gracious, the more so when he found that my only request was in favor of Bryan—for his preferment if he should so deserve.

"Ah," said her Majesty, who valued herself on knowing everything; "is not he de young Irish king, dat my Lord Digby speaks of? Jermyn saith it is but base blood after all."

"Whatever it be, madam," said the Prince,

who always felt bound to take a soldier's part against a courtier, "whatever it be, he has shed more of it for your Majesties, than little Jermyn's whole carcass ever contained in his best of times."

"Ah, me, yes," replied her Majesty; "I did hear dat he was hang very often; but dese Irish are used to dat."

Prince Rupert had meant well; yet I doubt however whether Bryan will owe much promotion to his support on this occasion. The King, to my great relief, interrupted his highness's further rejoinder, and amiably endeavored to smoothe the argument.

"We claim to have some Irish blood in our own veins," said he, smiling, "so we must speak of it respectfully; and you need not fear, my Lord Hastings, that I shall take good care of my young kinsman. You will soon return, I trust, to our court, and be yourself my witness in this matter. But here comes Ned Hyde with his budget of daily miseries, and I will detain you no longer from your journey."

With these words, his Majesty turned to his melancholy minister, and immediately afterward I took my leave. Prince Rupert remained in a state of high argument with the Queen concerning the late siege of Gloucester.

Once more upon the open road; once more free from service and responsibilities, my heart bounded with boyish buoyancy. The sun shone radiantly; the fresh breezes from the hills blew merrily round me; every bird seemed to lavish its sweet music, every hedge seemed to breathe sweet perfume. For a while, life's path looked bright before me, but suddenly the Past revived and flung its shadow far over every gleam of happiness; hope seemed to recede beyond the bounds of earth, and to brighten only for another world.

The two persons between whom I rode might have been impersonations of these different moods. Hotspur, as I shall still call him, was actually glowing with all the warmest hues and hopes of life; the old chaplain's face and form were almost monumental in their whiteness and their deep repose. The young Cavalier was the emblem of exulting youth; his companion, that of calm, declining age; my mortal nature envied the one, my spiritual nature envied the other. I said so to the younger, who heaved a deep sigh, and exclaimed:

"Stick to the old one, then, my dear kinsman, for I'm the most miserable man on earth. Read that," he continued, presenting me with a rosy-scented little note; "you may spell it over, if you like, for you never saw the handwriting before. Just as I was mounting I received it, in reply to a world of serenades, and love-tokens, and whispered compliments, not to mention a dozen of gallons or so of sack consumed in drinking to her health. That Oxford is a ruinous place, doubtless, to one's heart; what between beauty and wine, and squabbles and jealousies, one's mind is always in a diseased state, ready to receive every tender infection. Then those cloisters are very dangerous: I know nothing that makes me nervous like the faint rustle of a woman's gown, as she moves along those shadowy places, or startles the eye in some soft moonlight, where they glance by like spirits—yea, as if they were the beatified and greatly changed ghosts of the old women—dons, I mean—who of yore fre-

quented those places in caps and gowns of a different cut. Ah! it will be pleasant, after all, to get back to one's beleaguered old castle, where one is safe from everything worse than musket balls and honest steel. Yet, Hastings, Kate Killigrew is wondrous fair."

I turned to the chaplain, and inquired if he regretted our departure: "Truly, sir," he replied, "I have nearly lost that youthful habit of regretting. Nevertheless, I did much affect that monastic life, save that it is somewhat papistical, and yet not altogether, or by any means ascetic. But that must surely be a blessed place—shining like a light upon a hill—that All Souls—which Master Jeremy Taylor doth inhabit and enlighten by his sound and saving doctrine."

"Bad place, bad place, depend upon it, reverend sir," interrupted Hotspur; "except Merton College, where our gracious Queen herself resides, I know none worse. Some of the handsomest ladies in England are lodged there, and the ale-besides is as strong as—ah, my head aches at the thoughts on't."

Between these two incongruous companions, I rode on contentedly until we reached Banbury, where we halted for the night. Throughout the entire road we were obliged to follow from one royal garrison to another, rather than to take direct roads, which were generally occupied by the enemy. When we at length reached Ashby-de-la-Zouch, we were most hospitably entertained there by my kinsman. Here, with a scant garrison, he had kept all the forces of the Roundheads at bay, since the beginning of the wars; ever vigilant to defend himself, yet ever ready and forward to assist his comrades, in the surrounding but distant garrisons.

When at length we prepared to depart, he accompanied us as far as the boundary of his own county; and insisted on furnishing us with an escort of twelve troopers as far as Belvoir Castle, whither I was now bound. When there, I expected to learn the true state of Lincolnshire; and if I found it impossible to travel otherwise to my home, I intended to apply for a pass from the rebel general, or even to visit it in disguise if necessary.

It was toward the close of a soft and mellow October day, that we came in sight of the fine old castle of Belvoir, seated proudly in its magnificent position, high over its surrounding woods and ruined Priory. To this my old friend looked forward with an antiquarian's zealous interest, while my attention was wholly occupied in scrutinizing the roads by which we were to reach it; for the last light was already fading, and I and all my party were strangers in that country.

Night closed in suddenly with a heavy fog, and we groped our way uncertainly, until we were hailed by a countryman, who demanded who and whence we were. One of Loughborough's troopers answered roughly, and desired the fellow to show the way; but, before he had done speaking, the countryman was gone.. We could not attempt to follow him, the darkness had become so great that we were fain to alight and feel our way on foot. At length we were saluted by another voice, which inquired whether we were not the cavaliers that had lost our way to Belvoir.

"If ye be," he said, "ye've taken the wrong road and got your backs to it; but I'll lead ye

there for a silver shilling, seeing ye're so sore beset."

I ordered him to mount behind Blount, who explained to the guide in his own pithy manner, that the slightest mistake would be instantly fatal to him, the said guide. We now changed our direction slightly, as we thought, under the orders of Blount's companion.

At length he called a halt, and declared that unless we dismounted, he could not find the track over the common on to which we had strayed before he joined us. Blount, accordingly, was reluctantly compelled to let him down, fastening at the same time a stout cord round his neck, in order, as he told him, to serve for a clew or a halter, as the case might require. We then began to move again, and soon thought we heard confused noises, which our guide assured us was the wrangling or carousing of the Belvoir Cavaliers. But at the same time he stopped to pause and listen, and then gave such a tug at his leading string, that Blount checked it back with all his force, in the hopes of hanging him. But the cord came home so unexpectedly, that Blount had almost tumbled from his horse; his prisoner had cut the cord. In another moment, Blount's ready pistol rang after the fugitive, and was almost immediately answered by a discharge of musketry. I gave orders to charge forward—but one-half of our horses recoiled, and the others fell, against a stone wall, from behind which the ambuscade had poured their fire. We were all well accustomed to emergency, and were soon charging in the opposite direction, but there we were again met by high gates, which had been closed behind us.

All this time a succession of volleys rolled in upon us, which—notwithstanding the darkness—began to tell fatally. I then called out to my men to dismount, to cease swearing, and to sell their lives as dearly as they could. About half a dozen of us made a rush at the wall whence the fire came, bounded over it and cut down a musketeer probably to every man. We were soon overpowered, however, by pikes and clubbed muskets which these fellows used like flails; one of them deprived me of all sense.

When I came to myself, I was in a large wagon, lying bound upon a heap of damp straw. Blount and one of the troopers were beside me there. All the rest, with one exception, had died, as I guessed, too truly, where they fell. When we had begun to move under the direction of our unknown guide, feeling some misgivings, I had requested the old chaplain to keep some hundred yards behind us and to be guided only by the sound of our footsteps. He had thus escaped, and been shut out from the ambuscade into which we fell.

"Body o' me!" exclaimed that faithful follower, "but I'm the happiest man in England at this blessed hour to hear you speak once more;" and at the same time, he pressed both his hands to that poor mangled frame he had evoked, whether to stifle his grinding pains, or to help himself to suppress emotion, I know not. "We've lost the day once more, my Lord," he continued, "and surely the prayers of the poor must have been about your honor, or we'd have lost our lives too in that base farm-yard. I wonder shall we ever win a battle?"

I inquired if he was badly wounded.

"I have got some bruises," he answered: "but those clodhoppers let blood enough too, to keep the fever down; and if it please God, I may yet see the poor woman that owns me after all!"

I had never heard of this personage before; I observed, therefore, as soon as I could get sufficient breath, "So you have a wife, then?"

"Why not exactly, my Lord, for the poor woman died whilst I was away with your father, at the Isle of Rhé. But when I was prisoner there with a French woman—(a Protestant, though she spoke French)—I got married to her in a sort of manner, for it was service only read in French gibberish. Well, I escaped, and she didn't, and I never knew rightly whether I was married to her or not, poor thing, till I heard the other day that she had found her way at last into Lincolnshire, and that my old father had received her, and was keeping her for my sake. But I own to you I never felt I was a married man, till I got knocked over last night, and lay dying, as I thought, without one to drop a tear for me, but my old father, and he wouldn't be guilty of such a weakness."

As this conversation proceeded, we had been moving along slowly by a broad and quiet stream, which I soon recognized as the Trent. Our only escort, that we could see, consisted of a couple of pikemen, who walked close behind the wagon; but I thought I could hear the tramp of troopers, both in front and rear. Suddenly there seemed to be some alarm given to our captors, for our two guards tossed their pikes into the wagon, and taking up their matchlocks, began to blow their match. At the same time, a body of horse galloped back to join their comrades in the rear. We could just hear the well-known shout of "For a King! for a King!" followed by the clash of arms and pistol shots. Our horses were lashed into a gallop, our musketeers leaped into the wagon, and the rough jolting soon reduced me once more to a state of insensibility.

I afterward learned that the attempt at our rescue, by a body of Newark horse, had failed; we had been carried into Nottingham Castle and given up to the charge of Colonel Hutchinson; or rather of his wife, for the Colonel was then absent.

* * * * *

Thus far have I completed the task I set myself. A full month has elapsed since I began it; a month unmarked, except by the memory of the scenes I have recalled, and noted down each day, as if they had been reenacted. During all this time I have received honorable, and even kind treatment; but I have seen no living creature, except the Caliban, my gaoler. On him I have tried all kindness, and even bribes in vain. He seems to take a professional sort of pleasure in making my confinement as irksome as possible. But one pleasant communication has he vouchsafed to make me, and that evidently by command of his superiors. As soon as Blount was able to travel, he had been released and exchanged with the cavaliers of Newark for one of the Roundhead garrison of Nottingham. I was not permitted to see him, however, though a verbal message was allowed. That message contained merely an injunction to my faithful servant to return to his home as soon as possible, and to live peaceably, until better times should come.

* * * * *

I am now unoccupied, and in the absence of all distraction, I feel disemployment pressing on me like a burden. I miss my work, as if it had been some kindly watchful, thoughtful friend; what was at first mere labor had become an occupation, occupation became interest, and that interest a pleasure. A pleasure sadly diminished, however, as I look back upon what I have written; and what, being written, must so remain. When I attempt to improve a sentence, I find I must wholly alter it; if altered, the connecting sentences require also reparation, and thus the whole fabric would fall to the ground.

So I put away my file of papers, and turn to other objects of interest, and such objects of distraction as I can discern through the three narrow and dim panes of glass that light my cell. A mass of heavy clouded sky is all that I can see, with now and then a happy bird careering by; there is a hand's breadth, too, of the old battlement visible, and on it the lichen has changed color since the winter cold set in. Of my three flies that used to buzz cheerfully on those three melancholy bits of glass, two are dead, and one can scarcely crawl; but as I follow his laborious movements, I seem to trace a letter—yes, surely, and another—written on the pane.

Miraculous power of communicating thought to thought!—so little acknowledged when we are free and surrounded by the thousand ties that make all human nature one—now I feel its force. He who last inhabited this cell is about to speak to me by those simple signs, scarcely legible, except to the keenest watchfulness. Yes, there are letters, but they are so few, that I prolong the pleasure of my suspense, and husband the treasure of something new whereon to speculate. And now I gaze again, and scrutinize; but surely, my eyes are dim, and I have a strange wandering in my thoughts. I sit down to soothe myself, and then again strain my eyes to those faint letters.

Now I can read: "*In the left corner, beneath the bed, a small square stone will—*" My sight fails me again, and at the same time the gaoler enters with my daily meal.

It was not my accustomed attendant, but a soldier almost as silent. Eagerly as I strove to obtain information from him, I could only learn my former warden had sickened of what was commonly called the gaol-plague, and died that morning; and surely I, too, must have caught it: my eyes are yet more dim, and my brain reels—I shall hide away my writings, and—

* * * * *

I have wakened, after a long time, as if from death; remembering dimly some pain, and many wild thoughts, with intervals of unconsciousness; and sometimes visions of women, silent, watchful, and consoling, passed before me. Who could they be? The very day felt lighter for their presence; the sweet whispered words lingered soothingly upon the air, and before the magical touch of the cool, soft hand, my brain's wild fever well nigh vanished. And then I seemed to hear, (whether it was in fancy or sweet truth, for it sounded as if it had fallen on another's ear,) a grave, but gentle voice, speaking mournfully; "Poor youth! poor youth! Doubtless he hath known much sorrow; and surely he appeareth too good for his evil calling."

But all this was and is a dream to me. All I

know is, that I am now recovering from severe illness, and that I must have been tended.

As my thoughts and memory recover, those three panes of glass recur to me with all their interest. I draw myself painfully toward the window, and read once more: "In the left corner beneath the bed a small square stone will move." That was all; but it was enough to inspire me with speculations, and eager hopes for many an hour.

When my jailer entered again, he was followed by a surgeon, in whom, to my great joy, I recognized my old friend, He-that-healeth. He read at a glance in my countenance that I was far recovered, and had recognized him.

He laid his finger on his lip, and said authoritatively: "Speak not, else shalt thou be left solitary. I will tell thee some few words, and perhaps to-morrow thou mayest speak some for thine own self. Thou hast been ill—near at death's door; now thou art spared, to lead, I trust, a more profitable life."

So saying, he left me, but returned on the following day, when I gleaned from him that I had been dangerously ill for a fortnight; that Mrs. Hutchinson, the Governor's wife, had been very anxious about me, and had even visited me more than once. That an unsuccessful attack had been made by the Cavaliers of Ashby, it was supposed in order to rescue me, when the chief of the party having been sorely wounded, they had retired. That the Governor was very anxious to have me exchanged or removed, but that some secret and strong influence in London had prevailed against me. Finally, that he himself had had a quarrel with Harrison, who commanded his former regiment, and had applied for leave to retire to his own country, Scotland; but that Colonel Hutchinson, a mild, good man, had prevailed upon him to give his services to the garrison at Nottingham. "And now, farewell," he concluded. "I shall not be permitted to visit ye again, for ye require mine aid nae mair, and the commands of the Governor are vera strict. So far ye weel."

No sooner had the door closed, than I essayed to prosecute my great discovery. Exerting all my feeble strength, I removed the bed a foot from where it had rested, and there I found the small stone specified in the writing on the glass. With trembling eagerness, I removed it, but found nothing except a damp, earthen flooring. Feeling about the place, however, my fingers encountered something sharp; it was a small fragment of glass, which I flung away in disgust and disappointment. Having satisfied myself that there was no aperture beneath the stone, I replaced it and the bed as carefully as possible, and then flung myself down to rest, and ponder on what the meaning of all this might be. Suddenly I rose, and sought about for the piece of glass, wiped it clean, and then held it to the light; it spoke at once, in letters clear, distinct, and well-formed. The writing ran thus:

"The hearthstone will be easily removed; beneath it is a passage, wrought by weary hands in the space of eighteen months. It will lead to the old disused chapel of the castle, and under the broken window on the left there is a tombstone, which opens into Mortimer's Hole. Being struck with sore sickness after I had made all things ready to escape, I have written these words, in hope that, if I die, some other prisoner may profit

by my labors. Pray for the soul of Ambrose Gifford. June 16, 1637."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

The heaven under which I live is fair,
The fertile soil will a full harvest bear;
Thine, thine is all the barrenness, if thou
Should'st but sit still and pine, when thou should'st
plow.

When I but think how many a tedious year,
Our patient sovereign did attend
His long misfortunes' patient end.

COWLEY.

NEAR LAUSANNE, Oct. 1649.

* * * * *

MANY a long day has passed since last I saw this manuscript. The pages are stained and torn and the ink is faded. Innumerable were the chances against its ever having seen the light; yet its old leaves are open to me once more, and claim their finishing. Far different are the scenes and circumstances amid which I resume my pen from those with which I was surrounded when last I laid it down; far different the mood and feelings in which I wrote, as if I belonged to another family and race.

* * * * *

I am living in a land of liberty. How could men be otherwise than free amid such god-like scenery? Those Alpine summits, raising their stainless and transparent snows to heaven, offer a fit theme for freedom. No slave can skulk, no tyrant trample there. The very winds that circle round them are pure and strong, redolent of noble thoughts and strenuous deeds. Hypocrisy or baseness could not breathe that air and live.

Heroes of Sempach and Morgarten, ye flung back a usurping protector from your sacred soil; but who would have dared to name to you the murder of a lawful King? Patriots of Schwitz and Unterwalden, no impious act of yours ever violated the great council of your nation! Reformers of Zurich and Geneva, your great labors were never consummated by cant, or defiled by blasphemous fanatics!*

Therefore is your uncontaminated land a fit refuge for the free—a fit asylum for those who have fought in vain against the Usurper and the Church-destroyer.

* * * * *

I turn from thoughts and memories that inflame my soul, to the blessed scenes around me, that soothe and charm it into philosophic calm and Christian contentment. Nothing but a sense of willful sin can poison the happiness that munificent nature sheds around us here: every sense is gratified, exalted, and refined; the painter's

* The Cavalier speaks here with all the bitterness of an exile and a defeated man, yet mildly, in comparison of what his fellow-exiles, Ludlow and Denzil Holles, both Roundheads, wrote. However, we may presume, that even the Cavalier did not exaggerate, when we read the following extract, concerning the triumphant Puritans; it is written by a great modern historian, whose sympathies, it is unnecessary to state, are altogether anti-Cavalier; "Major-Generals fleeing their districts; soldiers reveling on the spoils of a ruined peasantry; upstarts enriched by the public plunder, taking possession of the hospitable firesides and hereditary trees of the old gentry; boys smashing the painted windows of cathedrals; Fifth monarchy men shouting for King Jesus; Quakers riding naked through the market-place; agitators lecturing from tubs on the fate of Agag, &c."—*Macaulay*.

CHAPTER XXXV.

And music's ear rest satisfied; and even the
 heart surrenders its ideal to the actual
 beliness before him.

For, even as I write, both time and clime come
 to render this beautiful region most beauti-
 ful. A balmy evening of a happy southern
 spring is approaching; the golden sunshine is
 all pouring down upon the snowy mountains,
 all trickling through the pine-forest of the hills.
 Lausanne is lighted up by its last rays—all ex-
 cept yon somber castle on the heights; Vevay
 comes out from its rich vineyards, and then the
 sun's broad light is lost among the woods of Cla-
 mas. But a lovelier light succeeds, tenderly
 transparent over the emerald fields round Chillon,
 all gorgeous in violet and purple, as it passes
 away into the valley of the Rhone. Right op-
 posite to us, over romantic Meillerie, the hills
 are dark and abruptly from the water's edge—
 deep-wooded glens and verdant promontories
 hemming below; above, there is nothing but
 broad expanses of eternal snow, towering into icy
 masses that seem to pierce the sky. And
 sometimes the fascinated gaze will linger on the
 ice, in whose faithful bosom every beauty of
 the mountains lies reflected; and sometimes our
 eyes will wander eastward, on finding at every
 glance new interest arise, until lost in the recess-
 es of the mountains over Martigny.

Full in the presence of these glorious scenes
 stands my humble cottage, ennobled not dwarfed
 by the surrounding majesty of Nature, man's nat-
 ural domain. In my most vainglorious and
 prosperous hour, I never felt so truly proud as
 when gazing on this wondrous scenery; and feel-
 ing that it was made for me, and such as me, by
 Him who made man at first in his own glorious
 image.

Such thoughts as these are fostered by the
 comparative solitude in which I live. The sun
 seems to rise for me when I would begin the
 day; for me the rain comes, when wanted by
 my young and dusty vines; night closes softly
 over the world when it and I are weary. In
 social crowds man loses his own individuality,
 as he acquires some portion of that of others. In
 seclusion he looks upon himself and others as
 seen afar off, in a more imposing form. '*L'iso-
 lément grandit tout*,' as they say in the language
 of this country.

My cottage and its surrounding fields are se-
 parated from the town of Lausanne by some un-
 dulating hills, that shut out from me the impor-
 tunateness, but not the convenience of the crowded
 haunts of man. My vines and pastures slope
 southward to the lake, in beautiful and conven-
 ient inequalities. A miniature seashore, strewn
 with fine sand and gravel, sweeps round my lit-
 tle territory, receiving, not repelling the gentle
 waves that scarcely oppress a wild flower with
 their angriest spray.*

But the evening has now closed in over all
 this, as under the genial influence of a blazing
 fire, I draw my chair to the table, and trim my
 lamp, and boldly attempt to resume my narrative.

* This must have been on or near the site now occu-
 pied by one of the most charming houses in the world
 —Denanton—the residence of Mr. Haldimand. The
 Cavalier is not responsible for omitting all description
 of this house, with its rich gardens, arbors, fountains,
 and unequalled pleasure grounds, thrown open to the
 public by their generous proprietor; but even my
 faint recollection of the surrounding scenery makes
 me blush for the Exile's attempt at its description.

Whether first nature, or long want of rest,
 Hath wrought my soul to this I cannot tell,
 But horrors are not now displeasing to me.
 I like this rocking of the battlements
 The lightning's glaring and the thunder's roar,
 Give pleasure to my eye and music to my ear.

Once more, borne back by recollection and
 too faithful memory: I am young, hopeful, and
 enterprising, once more I imagine myself im-
 prisoned in the Castle of Nottingham. The
 languor of long sickness has passed away, and my
 cell is grown quite cheerful in my eyes; for ex-
 pectation has shone into it, and the means of es-
 cape are open before me. * * *

It was with pleasant difficulty that I restrained
 my impatience for some days until my strength
 should be restored, and until I had accustomed
 myself, by such exercise as I could take in my
 narrow prison, to the long and perilous expedition
 that lay before me. At length the day arrived.
 I packed my closely-written manuscript into the
 smallest possible space, which still nearly filled
 one pocket of my doublet; often the bright fire
 tempted me to dispose of this incumbrance more
 easily, but the recollection of Caesar enabled me
 to conquer that temptation. I hid away some
 remnants of my morning's meal, and prepared
 myself to set forth as soon as the early sun had
 set, and my gaoler had paid me his last visit for
 the evening.

The weather was wild and stormy, though
 there was strong moonlight, and so far my in-
 tention was favored by circumstances. As the
 night drew near, the storm grew louder, shriek-
 ing and roaring about the old Castle till it echoed
 again and shook to its foundation. Thunder and
 lightning too, in all their winter force, now pealed
 and flashed, and the jailer seemed in greater
 hurry than usual to finish his evening's task, and
 escape to his companions.

No sooner had he withdrawn than I was on
 my knees, eagerly striving to raise the hearth-
 stone, my portal of escape. At length I suc-
 ceeded, by means of a small piece of iron that
 had been left to stir the fire. As I anticipated,
 a very rugged but practicable passage then dis-
 covered itself. Descending cautiously and holding
 my cresset lamp steadily, I could not but admire
 the patience of the poor prisoner who had made
 this passage; he must have each day carried back
 with him so much of the earth and rubbish he
 had excavated as could be disposed of without
 notice in his fire-place, or elsewhere, until re-
 moved away by his jailer.

After a few yards I found my way open out
 into a sort of dry well; and I found I could reach
 the bottom with my feet. On examining the
 walls carefully with my lamp, I found a large
 stone panel, which I soon ascertained moved
 upon a pivot. I then concluded that this was
 one of the old places of concealment, called
 "priests' holes," although often applied to less
 pious purposes. I concluded that I was now
 close to the chapel; but, before I ventured to
 move the panel, I shaded my lamp and looked
 cautiously into the space beyond.

It was indeed the deserted chapel that I had
 read of; a lofty and elaborately ornamented apart-
 ment, with arched groins supported upon hideous
 faces carved in stone. It had been long disused
 and was now moldering to decay, its sculptured

tracery falling into ruin, and its windows almost deprived of their beautiful "papist" painted glass. As the hurrying clouds rolled by, every now and then the moon shone brightly in, and sometimes a glare of lightning would fill the whole space with more vivid light than that of day.

One of those flashes now revealed to me a female figure, muffled in a large black cloak; she leaned with folded arms against a pillar, and seemed to be gazing on the war of the elements with stern pleasure. Sometimes she would walk pensively to and fro, and once or twice she looked upward to the roof, then clasped her hands together and resumed her walk, or her position at the window. A consciousness of some deep though unknown interest at hand made my heart beat quick and held me motionless in suspense.

A door opened at the inner end of the chapel; another female figure appeared and hastened over to where the former one was standing; a neatly and precisely dressed figure it was, and the voice it uttered was also precise, but sweet and clear.

"Dear friend," it said, "why wilt thou continue to frequent this gloomy place? What charm can its superstitious gloom possess for one like thee—and especially at such an hour? Come, I pray you, for our afternoon worship approaches, and the Colonel will be waiting our presence."

"Dear Lucy," replied a voice that made me start and oppressed my hearing by the quickened pulses it produced; "dear Lucy, indulge me yet this once, and excuse my absence to your good Colonel. This is the last evening I shall be here, and there is something—I scarce know what, dearer to my feelings in these sacred places of the papists, than I should care to confess to less indulgent ears than thine."

"But mine ears, friend Zillah," returned the precise voice, "are by no means inclined to be indulgent to such feelings; especially when I think that there may be something in the thought of our prisoner overhead, that excites thine interest more than Popish devices and painted glass."

"Whatever it be," replied Zillah coldly, "I pray you to leave me for the present. I tell you I cannot at this moment join thy meeting, nor would I willingly again face those rough men of war with their formal words, but rude, uncivil looks."

"I grant thee," said the Governor's wife, "that these men are not all that I could wish, and for that reason I will leave thee this once to thine own fancy and musings, beseeching thee not to be late in attendance at the evening meal."

With these words Zillah was left alone. I determined to address her; my chief object in escaping had been to obtain an interview with her, and now it offered beyond my expectations. It was true that her exalted ideas of duty and patriotism might induce her to alarm her friends, and it was even possible that Hezekiah, who was evidently my chief detainer, might have sufficient influence to induce her to give me up. But if it were so, escape, or life itself, was scarcely worth the having. At all events, come what might, I would not lose the only opportunity I had had for many months, of addressing her and exculpating myself from the calumnies of the Puritan.

I stepped forth from my concealment, and at

the same moment found myself by her side. A suppressed scream escaped her lips; she leaned back against the pillar for support, and then gradually recovering herself, she slowly and wonderingly pronounced my name.

"Yes, that Reginald Hastings whom you have so often repelled—so long held at a distance—so easily believed culpable of the grossest faults; he stands before you now, a prisoner on the verge of liberty, waiting to hear his fate from your lips, Zillah! tell me, in this dangerous moment, what have I done to deserve your doubts? Why do you ever keep the first friend of your childhood, at a distance, while you surrender your whole confidence to that dark and dangerous man who—"

"Hush," said Zillah, placing her finger on her lip and listening anxiously, "I expect him here. Nay, start not," she continued, with a smile of kindly trustfulness, a smile bright with the promise of all I ever hoped for, or believed her to possess. "You have wronged me, Reginald, as you shall now learn; but retire whence you came, quickly, and learn if you can, to what our interview may lead; truly, I rejoice that you are to do so."

Her anxious gestures for my withdrawal were of necessity obeyed; but I felt far from comfortable in my concealment. Bitter an enemy as Hezekiah had proved himself to be, I could not reconcile to myself the office of a spy upon his actions. But then he was Zillah's friend, and she would surely care that no wrong happened to him through her agency. All this time the storm was still raging wildly, and the chapel where we stood was alternately filled with intense light, or wrapped in the deepest gloom.

Once or twice, during what followed, I thought I saw the figure of a man's head looking in at the window, but the distance from the ground might render it impossible. Zillah continued at her post, still leaning against the pillar, and seeming like a spirit to appear and vanish, as the lightning came and went; and so, for a long space, she kept her patient watch, looking out upon the storm.

At length the inner door opened once more, and she turned her head anxiously; by the next gleam of light, I saw Hezekiah standing by her side, scarcely three steps from where I lay in reluctant ambush.

"I am come," said he, in his usual calm, solemn tones, "to seek thee, by thy kinswoman's desire: she doth not hold it meet that a tender damsel should be here at such an hour. Yea, 'tender' was the word she used, but she knew thee not. Methinks, that this worse than Pagan temple would rather affright than find favor in thy sight if thou wert tender;" (and here his own voice seemed to soften, but he resumed instantly in his own manner,) "Yea, surely, Moloch never imagined aught more soul-destroying than the Popish mysteries that once polluted this temple of superstition: their gloomy influences seem to hang around it still. There—as the lightning flashes in upon us, those carved faces grin out horribly, as if aroused from their stony sleep. And they say that these are the images of rival monks; verily, that they that made them are like unto them."

He ceased, and Zillah spoke: "Methinks, sir, it would be more probable, if my solitude must be broken into, that we should speak of what

you said concerned me so much to know; for to-morrow I depart betimes from hence, and thou, as I understand, abidest here."

But Hezekiah appeared to think there was no necessity for haste. He too had been looking out upon the storm with stern delight; he seemed to have tasted of it, and become inspired with its spirit.

"I marvel not," he exclaimed, "that a soul like thine can enjoy the fierce raging of these elements. These are sights and sounds to stir the spirit from its depths, and reveal its powers and its mysteries to kindred natures. Oh, would that I could do so—that I could reach thine inner ear—that thy heart as well as thine understanding were open to the ineffable happiness—the high intercourse—"

"A maiden's heart, sir, is no fit matter for conversation here," said Zillah, in a voice so stern that I scarcely recognized it. "The last time that your words wandered thus, I forbade you ever to approach me but in the presence of others, and where your holy calling was sure to be remembered better than your distempered fancies. Once more I have permitted your presence in private; prove to me that such conference was not idly sought for, or—depart."

Knowing the fiery and impetuous nature of the man whom Zillah thus addressed, I expected to hear high words in reply; but grief—unutterable grief, seemed to have bowed down his aspiring spirit, and the first fitful gleam that relieved the darkness, I could see his head was bowed upon his breast.

"Pardon me," at length, he said, in a subdued and hollow voice, "I ask pardon, if I presumed to hope for sympathy—even from a nature high and pure like thine. Yes, lady, when first I knew thee, my mind was troubled with the mysteries of these troublous times, my spirit was well nigh broken with disappointment. I had looked abroad over this goodly land for some one worthy to impersonate the great cause—some one of pure heart and exalted intellect, and endowed with that grace, without which all human gifts are snares. I looked, and found none—no, not one. And yet some consciousness of our great cause was to be found alive and stirring in ten thousand hearts; but there was none who possessed the spell to arouse and make them one and irresistible. I then turned, in my despair, from men to thee. They who live much alone with their own souls oftentimes see visions and dream dreams, that are sometimes revelations, and lead to miraculous success; sometimes but devices of the Evil One, to terminate in confusion and despair. Thou seemedst to me arrayed in all the gifts that could win hearts and souls of men to the great cause on which their happiness depended: thy dream-like beauty, thy commanding nature, thy ardent imagination, thine unconscious elegance—all seemed to mark thee out for the Deborah of our times—the Apostle of our cause. Lady, it was with no earthly or selfish aspirations that I first sought to work upon thy youthful heart, to steel it against the snares of the affections, and to preserve it to a loftier aim."

The Puritan here paused a moment, and I could well understand why Zillah remained spell-bound in silence, for so did I. Those strange, wild words seemed a clew to our fate; they were uttered in low tones, but so clear, that the storm

could not drown them, while the darkness that shrouded the speaker endued them with yet deeper impressiveness.

"Yes," he resumed; "after all I have seen and known since, I believe, that with me for thy minister, thou mightest have saved thy country from bloodshed, misery, and worse than all, approaching anarchy. There was one point of weakness in thy character, but that one was fatal, as it ever is in woman. Thou hadst parted with thy love, as Sampson with his hair, and, with it, all thy native strength. Nay, lady, listen now or never. I knew that if once thy heart of sacrifice was touched, thou wouldst do far more to defeat thy desires than to cherish them. But it was necessary, in the first place, to remove him who had unnerved thee with his love. For this reason, I brought that malignant, foppish Lord to his father's house to rob him of his son; for this cause, I had that son waylaid among the hills, and afterward again, when escorting thy father and myself from Nottingham. Nay more, I did what tried my spirit sorely: for this cause I left the youth to be slaughtered as a spy, when a word of mine could have saved him; and now for this same cause, he lies a prisoner in this castle. Behold what a devouring zeal can do! . . . But now that cause exists no longer; the mantle hath fallen from thy shoulders, and I have wrought in vain—all in vain—save in His eyes where thoughts are deeds. He hath no longer need of thee for His work, for He hath raised up a mighty man into whose hand all things shall be delivered. Now behold what a clear spirit, zealous for the truth alone, can bring itself to perform. This youth, the captive of my bow and spear, whom I have pursued even to the death—so long that he seemeth to me mine enemy—this youth is delivered into thine hand, do with him as thou listeth. My course is with thine no longer; thou hast started aside like a broken bow, and I must work alone—yea, alone—alone forever in the flesh! Happy, if in submissively enduring my darkly-fated lot, I may be permitted to purge off the foul dross of earthly infirmities and grievous sin."

The voice was silent; the lightning had ceased to play, so that I no longer could catch glimpses of him who uttered it; the storm, too, had exhausted its fury, and like the Puritan's tones, had subsided gradually into mournful cadences. He spoke no more; perhaps he did not trust himself, for he strode away toward the chapel-door with a heavy and echoing tread, that seemed to trample on his own desolate heart.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Quella benigna, angelica salute,
Che'l mio cor' a-virtute
Destar solea con una voglia accessa:
Tal ch' io non penso udir cosa giammai.

PETRARCA.

THE door had no sooner closed upon the Puritan than I stood by Zillah's side. I perceived she was in tears, and every motive induced me to keep silence until she spoke. At length she whispered, "You see all that you have suffered for my sake. Perhaps you have also learnt that I have had some share of trial since that noble-minded but frantic man first doomed me as an un-

conscious agent in his unimaginable schemes. I need not appeal to your generosity for secrecy in this strange matter as regards his story; your own feelings will insure its safety, as if it were my own. Doubtless, moreover, you are free, and therefore you must return, if it be possible, whence you came, and all our plans for your escape are naught."

So saying, she flung a small piece of paper with some weight attached to it from the window, and listened eagerly. There was no sound audible, however, but the creaking of the chapel door, which now opened and scarcely left me time to withdraw behind a pillar. A very earnest remonstrance followed from the voice of Mrs. Hutchinson, and Zillah with her friend withdrew.

It was long before I regained my cell, having, in the first instance, watched anxiously at the window for that which Zillah strove to hear. I then ascended to my prison as fast as I was able. The fire was almost extinguished, and I had some difficulty in re-lighting my cresset lamp. Scarcely had I done so, and cleared my dress from the marks of my late attempt, when footsteps sounded along the gallery, the door opened, and Colonel Hutchinson himself appeared.

He saluted me very courteously, regretted my long imprisonment, hoped that it was now nearly terminated, and late as it was (near eight o'clock), that I would join his family at supper and evening prayer. I accepted his proposal with as much pleasure as if I had not heard before of my improved fortunes, and descended the stone stairs with a sensation of delight.

In the circle collected round the high fireplace in the hall, I perceived Zillah and the governor's wife, whom I had seen in the chapel some two hours before. To the latter, I was formally presented, but my long acquaintance with the former was well known to these cousins of whom I had often heard. Mrs. Hutchinson's appearance was by no means puritanical, no more than that of her care-worn but soldier-like looking husband. He wore his hair long, in the fashion of our Cavaliers, and his fair wife likewise indulged in rich auburn curls, that set off her serene and delicate beauty to advantage.*

This amiable and accomplished lady instantly adapted herself to her husband's manner toward me; and with grave sweetness hoped that as a guest I should be able to forget that I had been their visitor in any other light. I returned to her my sincere and hearty thanks for all the courtesies that I had received, but especially for the great kindness which I felt had been extended toward me in my illness. Mrs. Hutchinson glanced involuntarily toward Zillah, and declared that she had done but little—only a small part of the duty that she owed to her Christian profession, and that she was, after all, but an unprofitable servant.

In such conversation, the minutes seemed to me to fly rapidly; when we were interrupted by the entrance of several officers in buff coats, who looked as if they had just come off duty. I then observed that the table was spread with abundant though homely fare for a large party, and I heard that these officers belonged to a regiment that was marching through.

* A beautiful picture of this lady (as our Cavalier describes her) is in the possession of Sir Robert Bromley, at Stoke Park.

They were Sir John Gell's Fencibles, and I was not surprised at Zillah's reluctance to meet them, for, without prejudice, they were the most ill-favored company of men I ever saw. Mrs. Hutchinson herself by no means seemed to approve of them,* and coldly seconded her husband's effort to be hospitable. The Colonel said a long grace, or rather prayer, excellent of its sort, and then we fell to supper. Soon afterward, Hezekiah entered and took his place at the lower end of the board, where the Roundhead troopers had already begun to make some noise. Instantly, however, their noise was hushed, and their meal finished hastily and in solemn silence.

We then rose, and stood during another grace, longer than the preceding one, and not very reverentially attended to by Gell's Fencibles. All were then preparing to retire, when a man-at-arms entered, and presented the Colonel with a sealed dispatch, saying that a messenger waited for a reply. At the same time he informed Mrs. Hutchinson that a poor lad, who seemed to be one of the faithful, craved admittance and a night's lodging in the Castle.

"He hath a cunning hand and a sweet harp," said the soldier; "and as thou turnest not away the poor, nor them that beg their bread, from thy gates, I thought that I might admit him. Verily he is one of the sweet singers of Israel, and hath much of my own trick in psalmody."

Mrs. Hutchinson smiled, (she did not observe, as I did, that her husband's brow darkened over his dispatch,) and said to Zillah: "We have had much trouble and weariness to-day; we will, if it please you, even hear this lad, since his melody is such as we may approve."

At a signal from his lady the soldier withdrew and soon returned accompanied by a young man, who looked poor, and weary, and travel-stained; he carried a small harp upon his shoulders, and stooped so low, even after his obeisance, that we could not see his face. The lady of the Castle, with Zillah and the rest of the household, resumed their places near the fire. Hezekiah stood apart, conversing in low tones with one of the strange officers, and the boy timidly seated himself on a small stool that had been placed for him at some distance from the fire. His head was still bent low, as he leaned over his harp, touching its sweet strings with a master's hand, when preluding with some wilder notes, he began to sing that beautiful lament on the captivity of Israel:

"By the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept,
When we remembered thee—"

So far he sang in deep, low, touching tones, but the words "remembered thee" were accompanied with a more emphatic tone, and an upward glance, that seemed to flash at once over Zillah and me before it reached the rafters. It was Bryan who sat before us.

A momentary surprise passed over Zillah's countenance, and was gone; but I was obliged to bury my face in my hands, as if absorbed by the music which continued its fine accompaniment to the end.

* As she confesses in her own interesting Memoirs, written at this time; in these Memoirs, however, all mention of the Cavalier's episode is omitted, probably for family reasons; the good lady was not writing history, and therefore, perhaps, did not feel obliged to tell the whole truth.

Gradually, as the minstrel proceeded, the various people in the room gathered nearer, and formed a breathless circle round him. Most of all, Hezekiah seemed touched; his pale and rigid features relaxed, and an almost soft expression stole over their stern character. Even so might Saul have found his dark shadows charmed away by the young Shepherd King.

As soon as the psalm was ended, a low sound of applause, conveyed in many hums, went round, but Hezekiah was the only one who spoke. He advanced toward me, and said, almost courteously, that he was glad that psalm applied to me no longer, as he had handed to the Governor an order from the Committee for my release. The Governor tried to interrupt his speech, and when it was finished, he rejoined:

"Not so—I have another order here which must not be gained, to guard this prisoner diligently, until the writer shall have speech with him."

Hezekiah's eye flashed unusual fire as he turned toward the Governor. "Show me the order that dares contradict the decree of the Committee of both Houses," said he, with the voice of one accustomed to authority.

"Behold!" replied the Colonel; "it is a very brief one. Yours, moreover, bears date November 5th, whereas this is dated scarce five hours ago; but read for yourself; the order is signed by OLIVER CROMWELL."

Hezekiah snatched at the note, read it, and bowed submissively. "Yea, it is even so—it is the hand and word of one to whom the good cause is now committed. Sir, you will do your duty."

So saying, without another word or glance toward any one present, the preacher retired.

The Governor then addressed me almost apologetically: "You have heard my orders, which I must obey, however reluctantly; I dare not even offer you parole, as I would fain do, if only to insure your sake-keeping: but we have now to deal with a hard man, who may not be withstood."

"I accepted this unpalatable declaration with as good a grace as I could command, and then drew near to Zillah, while the Governor went to summon my gaoler, and Mrs. Hutchinson thoughtfully withdrew to speak to the disguised harper. I hastily asked Zillah who was this new personage, this Cromwell, of whom they all stood in awe.

"He is one," said she, "as yet little regarded, except by those who know him well: but with them, his will is imperative, and the committee never questions what it pleases him to do. Moreover, I suspect he means to sell you your liberty at the price of your estates, for his ingenuity and unscrupulousness in raising money are notorious."

"I will remain and see him, then," I replied, "if only to prevent the appearance of your being involved in my flight. I suspect that Bryan has risked his life to assist my escape, and not without your privy. He it was whose face I observed looking in at the chapel window during the storm? I thought so. Tell him, if alive, I shall meet him two nights hence on the bridge toward the Newark road. And now I observe that the Governor begins to wax impatient; so farewell. What I would say, after all I have heard this night, is not for this place to hear,

scarcely for these lips to utter. My proudest and happiest hope is satisfied—almost to the uttermost."

But one pressure of her outstretched hand, one glance toward Bryan, one bow of acknowledgment to my host and hostess, and I was gone. Closely followed by my gaoler, I returned through the long dark gallery, and once more heard the iron bolts and bars that so vainly endeavored to secure me.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

You have stooped my neck under your injuries,
And sighed my English breath in foreign clouds,
Eating the bitter bread of banishment:
Whilst you have fed upon my seigniories,
Disparked my parks, and felled my forest-wood;
Razed out my impress, leaving me no sign,
Save men's opinions, and my living blood,
To show the world I am a gentleman.

SHAKESPEARE.

How vainly we attempt to mete out our lives by spaces of time—hours, weeks, days—as measured by the clock. In the soul's life, a few minutes may do the work of years, whilst a lapse of years may pass us by unnoticed. At one time we seem to stand still, while the world whirls on without us; at another, we seem to fly toward another existence or some great change, at a pace that leaves our own world far, far behind us.

Thus months had lately passed over me in such shapeless monotony, that I seemed as if in one long torpid dream, with nothing but my heap of manuscript to remind me that I had had existence, or employed it. Now, lo! between the hours of six and nine of the town clock, the events of half a life have come thronging in, and that so rapidly, that I have scarcely yet found leisure to arrange and recollect them. I know not when it was that Zillah told me that she had left her father ill at ease in mind and body, when she heard that I was dying; that she had come hither in a litter, escorted by Colonel Hutchinson's brother, who was conveying supplies from Lincolnshire to London, and was to return thither the next day; that her father had been more and more severely mulcted by the Parliament, and had at length begun to form plans of leaving England, that my old home had been utterly pillaged, and it was said, even sold, with all my lands, by order of the Committee of Sequestrations. All this must have transpired in conversation at supper, for such details would never have found a hearing when we were alone, or out of others' hearing. I had now ample time, however, to reconsider them, and to plan my own movements, in case of my escape.

'Twas a wide subject for consideration; I was homeless and houseless in the world. I had demanded and received five months' leave of absence, and unless I passed that time carousing among the northern loyal garrisons, or hunted like a partridge among my native hills, I knew not at this moment what was to become of me. At length I resolved, at all risks, to seek my old home once more, to procure one more interview with Zillah, and then, like the knights-errant of old, to leave it to Providence to shape my future courses. And so I fell asleep.

Before dawn, however, I was awake and list-

ening for the sound of Zillah's horses, which I soon afterward heard or thought I heard; for the various noises of this warlike little city were wont to begin betimes, and the drums and trumpets of the castle guard anticipated the day.

So passed some hours without event, but toward noon, I heard more noise than usual, and the sound of troops mustering on parade. When my gaoler entered, he informed me that Colonel Cromwell was arrived, and that the whole garrison was under arms for his inspection. Since my being received as one of the family on the previous night, my attendant seemed to consider himself at liberty to converse with me; he even informed me that the great Colonel was by no means the exalted-looking person he had expected to behold.

"Not," said he, "but he's a stout personable enough man for a halberdier, or the like o' that; but his clothes are so mean and ill of fashion, and his bit o' linen all stained and rumpled like—pooh! you'd never believe him to be ope o' the gentlefolks, not by no means."

I observed that an active soldier might easily be excused some faults of dress, and demanded what sort of face he had, for that could not be so easily altered.

"Could it not!" said my simple-minded informant. "As I'm a sinner, I never saw two different men more unlike, since I was a babe, than I have seen this same colonel within the last half-hour. Why, sir, when we were all assembled in the hall to hear him expound and pray, I thought him the mildest and resignedest Christian I ever beheld, and as for his eyes, I could see nothing but the whites of them, and that same half lost under his big eyebrows. But, save us! when I saw him next—(you see when the others had left the hall, after the expounding—which, indeed, I didn't overmuch understand—one or two of us, that are in trust, were bid to wait for orders), when, our governor said something to this new Colonel about your being half-released from bondage, I looked for his answer, and his look a'most made one stagger back. Why, I'd take my oath on't (if swearing wasn't unlawful for a Christian man), that no ten men, no, nor their wives to boot, ever put so much anger into a single look; and it wasn't the anger only, but the strength that was in it, that made me pity our poor governor, and wonder he could stand it. And then this Colonel Cromwell stamps, and calls out for our Hezekiah, and bellows about Saul and Amalekites, and other hard words; and when he heard that the minister wasn't heard of since the lady went away this morning, he sat down by the table, and clinched his fists, and then clasped them, and I believe, took to expounding himself for comfort, for he said no more out loud to any one. And then, at a sign from the governor, we went out at last; and you see that's the reason that your dinner's so cold to day."

My gaoler might have gone on much longer to such a ready listener as he found in me, but that he was alarmed by the sound of running steps along the gallery, and a hasty knocking at the door. A man-at-arms had been sent to desire him to bring me with all speed before this redoubtable Colonel, and I followed him with some interest to the well-remembered hall.

There stood Cromwell, now not only calm, but immovable-looking. I did not then note

the rest of his appearance; my whole attention was riveted on the massive, but deeply-marked countenance that met mine. The bold, broad brow bespoke indomitable resolution rather than command; the clear, small eyes (gray I believe they are) that glanced out from beneath his shaggy eyelashes, were not what is called piercing, but they looked *inevitable*; if I may use that word to express that it seemed impossible to baffle them. The nose was of the shape and somewhat of the color that toppers celebrate, but the mouth might have become Rhadamanthus himself. The whole visage seemed to argue a marvelous compound of subtilty and strength, yet over all was a strange and almost noble expression of immortal sorrow; something sublime indeed, that fixed itself more deeply in my memory than all else.

This singular man now stood in a firm but ungraceful attitude to receive me. Two of his officers leaned against the mantel-piece where Zillah had been the night before, and Colonel Hutchinson remained apart. The only person seated seemed to be a sergeant, who took from his side-pouch pen, ink, and paper, and placed them on the table with his iron head-piece and carbine, which he had carelessly unslung. He appeared to act as his chief's secretary.

After a few minutes' silence and scrutiny, Cromwell, to my surprise, turned away from me, and thus addressed his officers aloud:

"Behold! this is the sort of man with whom we have to deal; this is the work put upon us. Yea, here is a brave gentleman—one of good report; honorable and just moreover in his generation, and well-beloved by the dwellers on his lands. One whom we have marked as not swift to shed blood, or greedy of gain, or profane, or a wine-bibber." He paused, and I began to feel nervous about the conclusion of this most unexpected eulogium, though I had not then known his panegyric, and swiftly following denunciation of the brave Lord Capel. He now looked at his officers steadily and mournfully, as if he was reading some unwelcome counsel in their countenance, as he resumed: "But it is even so, my masters; ye say that having put his hand to the accursed thing, he must pay the penalty thereof. It may not be that the people suffer both ways—that they be not only warred against in the field, but likewise defrauded of their righteous spoil. Is it not so, my masters? Wherefore, young man, I have sent to have speech with thee; for the Parliament is very merciful, and would not condemn any man without a hearing. What sayest thou?—why should not thine estates be sequestered according to the laws in this case made and provided! And thou shalt have liberty to depart the kingdom, and mayest thou find fit comfort as well as chastisement for thy poor soul amid thy wanderings!"

However unintelligible to me the preamble might have been, the conclusion of Cromwell's speech required no explanation. He spoke, however, as one who considered me as a surely bound prisoner; I answered him as one who possessed the means of freedom. I briefly denied having committed any crime against the people, in whose true cause alone, I asserted, I had freely expended my money and my blood, as I was ready to do my life. I confessed, however, that I had the strongest objections to the sequestration of my property, in order to further his views of

the people's necessities; and I requested to know what would be the result of my refusal to accept the boon of banishment in return for the loss of my estates.

"Behold," replied Cromwell, turning again to his officers instead of to me, "behold how bravely he speaketh. Verily he hath a great gift of words. Ah, me! to think of his blindness withal, and how the prince of this world can darken the best understanding. Why, man," continued he, suddenly turning to me, changing his tone, and speaking rapidly, "why, man, thou art a lawful prisoner to the Parliament; the laborer is worthy of his hire; thy ransom must be paid; yea, and thy sins of malignancy atoned for, if not with thy property, it may be with thy life."

My spirit was now roused within me as if I had met this mine adversary in the field instead of in an argument; he appeared to me as though he stood confronted with and confronting my King. I was about to defy him, therefore, when Hezekiah entered the hall, and walked up to the place where we were standing, without any salutation or apology. Cromwell turned to him, and demanded gravely,

"Where hast thou been loitering? Long have we waited for thee, in deference to the wishes of the Committee, expecting that thou wouldst assist us in the matter of this malignant; but thou tarriedst, and we have proceeded without thy help to announce to him his sequestration, and free grace to depart the country."

Hezekiah met this chiding with his usual calm, impassive look.

"Then with submission, thou hast erred in so doing," he said, "and thy words are wind. Thou canst not take from him what is not his."

He then proceeded, with unmoved voice and countenance, to state that when, by the Parliament order, the house of Beaumanoir was destroyed, he had applied himself to the examination of the family papers, and he therein had found—what had been revealed to him by one of his flock—a deed disinheriting me and all my family. It appeared, according to his statement, that my great grandfather happened to have power over the estates, and he, in a fit of anger, had disinherited his elder son in favor of his second son, (who was grandfather to my cousin Hotspur.) The elder, who was then abroad, returned on hearing of his father's illness, but he found him dead. My grandfather had never known of the disinheriting deed, nor thought of examining into legal papers that had descended from father to son for six hundred years; he was satisfied with discharging the obligations of his father's will, made many years before. Meanwhile his second brother was only anxious that none, and he least of all, should ever know that such a deed existed, as that which would have deprived his elder brother of his possessions. He could not, however, abstract the dangerous document without breaking seals, or without his brother's knowledge; so, not knowing much of business, he trusted to chance, and to the death of the lawyer who had drawn the deed, for its eternal concealment. He received the moderate patrimony allotted to him in his father's will, and established himself at some distance; his son, marrying the heiress of Ashby, was the father of my cousin, Harry Hotspur.

When the troubles broke out, a legend of this transaction reached the ears of Hezekiah, while

he was in our neighborhood. He had traced that legend till it assumed the likelihood of a truth, and, finally, he had possessed himself of this document after the sack of our house; with the views he then held, it had promised to be of importance to him.

"All this," he continued, looking at me with the same unmoved aspect, "I thought it expedient to declare in the young man's presence, in order that he may hold to no vain hopes of becoming once more a dweller in the house of his fathers: it is desolate, and he is a beggar. Wherefore I would counsel him that he gird up his loins, and be stirring in a new life: that he turn to profit his departure into strange lands; and, fighting for the good cause among our brethren in Germany, that he may win his bread in a righteous cause."

He ceased and turned his deep bright eyes upon mine with searching scrutiny, in which I imagined a gleam of triumph might have been detected. That thought enabled me to meet his gaze with steady defiance: the astonishing news that I had just heard was, indeed, too sudden to affect me, as afterward it did, when I thought of the world of consequences it involved, and that the very graves of my ancestors belonged to another. Thinking at the moment, however, only of retorting his scrutiny, I replied,

"Whatever were the motives, sir, that prompted your zealous search for this important document, I declare upon mine honor, as a gentleman, that I would have assisted your search with my best efforts, had I had the remotest suspicion that such a document existed—ay, and so would my father and my brave brother, who, it seems now probable, perished by your devices."

"And doubtless the young man says truly," exclaimed Cromwell, with something of a noble and believing air: "yea, doubtless truly. And now," said he, turning rather grimly to Hezekiah, "I would inquire where hast thou been with all this knowledge hidden in thy heart, while the servant of the saints has been talking foolishly. Speak out, man, for it seemeth that our prisoner is to be in all our councils."

"Last night," replied Hezekiah, "when the note was read to me, I knew thou wouldst not be far off, and I hastened to seek the spoiler who dwelleth at Ashby-de-la-Zouch, but who is now nearer at hand on some evil design. He it is whom thou shalt sequester; but I desired to have better tidings for thee. I approached him at the peril of my worthless life, and I offered to make him possessor (as in sooth he is by law) of all these estates, if he would convert his sword into a reaping-hook, or draw it in the faithful cause."

"And he spurned thee?" interrupted Cromwell.

"He reviled me, it is true, after the manner of the profane," Hezekiah replied coldly, and continued: "I then announced to him that he was the actual possessor of this property, but that speedy sequestration of the whole would speedily follow, unless he consented to such fine as the Parliament (who, through me, their unworthy instrument, had procured for him all this estate) should appoint."

"And so Harry Hastings threatened to hang thee—was it not so?" demanded Cromwell, with a grim sarcastic smile.

"Nay," resumed Hezekiah, "but he desired

to see the document with such a pleased look, that I might have wrought great things if I had had it then."

"Fool!" said Cromwell impatiently, "it is time thou weanest thyself from men's affairs, for thou growest altogether too insane. I tell thee, he would have seized it and thrust it in the fire, and sworn after his profane fashion to this young man that it never existed, and was all a lie. Tut, man, I know he would! I would have done the same myself, when I walked in blindness and unregeneracy. But enough of this: hie thee straightway to thine apartment and fetch this precious document, and give it into the safe-keeping of 'Hold-fast-the-faith' here. Sequestration shall issue straightway thereon. Not against thee, poor youth, but against thy mad cousin. Now for the matter wherein thou art in truth concerned; I will take thy parole word, that thou depart this kingdom within five days, for which I will give thee my free pass; if not, the sentence which was pronounced against thee as a spy in Waller's malignant plot shall surely be put into execution and thou shall die. Lo! it is written."

And after some fumbling in his huge pockets, he produced a paper among many others, which bore my name and certain signatures. I only glanced coldly at the paper; I answered: "I will not be voluntarily a banished man. Do your worst upon me."

"Be it so!" said my judge solemnly, and he then motioned the governor to remove me. I soon found myself once more in silence, and once more face to face with death; or at the best with perilous escape and a life of penury before me.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

When flowing cups go swiftly round,
With no alloying flames;
Our careless heads with helmets crowned,
Our hearts with loyal flames.
When thirsty toil in wine we steep,
When healths and draughts go free;
Fishes that tinkle in the deep
Know no such liberty.

LOVELACE.

I CONSIDERED myself secure from violence until the morrow at all events; but then, I had sent Bryan notice not to expect me until the night following, and I feared for the danger he would thereby incur. If I would avoid an ignominious death, however, I felt that I had no alternative but to escape this very night. I endeavored to fix my saddened thoughts upon the measures necessary for me to take, and postponed my reflections on my altered condition to a time when I should have more leisure for them. I resumed my preparations for departure, and then waited with impatience for the jailer's last evening visit to be ended. This poor fellow had, however, been kind to me, after his fashion, and I felt some remorse as to the consequences he might suffer from my escape. When he appeared, I asked him if he had ever lost a prisoner? He looked at me very knowingly, as if he had detected me in making overtures to him:

"No, no," said he, "it won't do. I never lost a prisoner, and I never will."

"But," I persisted, "suppose he lost himself, would you suffer for it?"

"Why, no," he replied, thoughtfully, and scratching his head—"I don't s'pose I should; for I'm no regular jailer like, but only doing the business out of my common duty as a soldier, to oblige the Governor. Well," he continued, desirous of changing the subject, "old Noll, as they call him, is gone, and has left the Governor looking as if he had seen a ghost, instead of a man in buff and steel, who weighs thirteen stone, if he weighs an ounce. Nevertheless it's a weight off my poor mind that the castle's clear of him." And with these words the good fellow left me.

I was about to commence my operations on the hearth-stone, when a thought struck me that the Governor, or even Hezekiah, might visit me, and this thought kept me quiet until all was still within the castle. Then I cautiously explored my former track, closing the hearth-stone like a tomb above me, as I descended into darkness. With some difficulty I gained entrance into the old chapel, and at length discovered the mock tombstone that opened into Mortimer's Hole. Thence I found my way, guided by the noise, to where the guard was set. Close to the light of their watchfire I crept, and found a crevice that opened into the natural cave below. Then I groped my way into a broad meadow and stood free. In that exulting and glorious consciousness, I forgot all my sorrows past, and dangers to come.

Surely mere life itself must be a blessing, though we generally lose its physical enjoyment in the mental cares with which our coward anxieties are forever clouding it. There stood I, in the very shadow of the castle where danger and captivity and death awaited me; the dreariest weather of winter was howling round me, and a long and dangerous march before me. Yet I was happy, triumphantly happy. Hope bounded in every pulse, and imagination pictured a possible future, that all the consciousness of all my utter ruin and imminent danger could scarcely darken for the time. * * *

It was too early to seek Bryan at the bridge, and some chance traveler might be still stirring, so I flung myself on the dry rushes that lay scattered under the shelter of a haystack; there without impatience or suspense, I waited until my prison clock should strike midnight, and announce to me the best hour of completing my escape forever from its doleful voice.

Indeed, I had abundant matter for reflection and forethought. Within the last few hours the whole color and character of my life and position had been changed. As long as I remained in the Roundhead's country, I was an outlaw—everywhere I was penniless. It was some time before I could realize to my imagination that I was actually not only disinherited, but that I owed to another family all the money, justly theirs, that I or my father had ever spent. We had even supplied the King's necessities with another's wealth; but this alone I did not feel called upon to regret. Had it not been for our loyalty, our home had never been pillaged and ransacked, or our false position revealed to us by the discoveries that were then made there.

For some time the sudden consciousness of poverty weighed very heavily on my thoughts, but I soon flung off that care; I felt proudly that I was able to work my own passage across the Sea of Life. Nine-tenths of my fellow-men were doing the same thing, cheerfully and man-

fully,—and why not I? With head and heart and hand as good as theirs, I surely could as easily supply the actual wants of existence; its necessities, so simple and so few, although its desires are insatiable. My condition was now merely that of a soldier of fortune, and I should have preferred to have exercised that stirring trade in the Swedish or Dutch army, but duty seldom bribes with inclination to her stern standard. As long as my King was in the field, it was my simple duty to follow him, and to consider his interest in every respect as superior to my own.

It was long before I ventured to admit the thought of Zillah into the contingencies of my new condition. I proudly felt, however, that to her it would make no difference; but I also felt, that until the present unhappy troubles were ended, my relations with her must continue unaltered.

The castle clock at length sounded midnight, and roused me from my reverie. I stood up and began my career through the world as a man who has naught on earth to depend upon but himself. Alas for him with whom that dependence fails in his hour of need! I strode forth fearlessly, and smiled to think how ill I was provided for my future trade. I was unarmed, I had not even a knife wherewith to cut a stake from the hedge; I broke one and felt I had got over the first difficulty, and thus furnished, I marched away.

I restrained my new-born feeling of penniless independence, however, as I approached the castle gates leading to the opposite bridge. Though worth nothing to myself, I should have been a valuable prize to a Roundhead trooper, for I was still Lord Hastings. I passed safely and unnoticed, however, as if my new position had been recognized, and silently moved on through almost perfect darkness toward the river. Hist! is it the wind that whistles through the arches of the bridge? Yes, as I stand, all is still. Again I advance more cautiously, and then the whistle sounds again, more shrilly—and familiar. I know it well, and the faithful voice that thus welcomes me. I answer, and the next moment Bryan is by my side, whispering eagerly:—

"Haste, haste, the Castle's alarmed—I hear them stirring—there goes the trumpet. Blessed Mother, I thank thee that I came! Away! Away!"

So saying, and running at a speed that I could scarcely follow, he turned to the right beyond the bridge, into a swampy meadow, and continued his race. "Tread carefully here," he whispered; "there's only a bit of a willow hurdle I made to-day, and the bog on each side is deep enough to sink a church. That's all right—on,!" Stepping cautiously along his basket-work bridge, I followed at speed, until we approached a willow grove by the river.

By this time the Castle gates were thrown open, torches were gleaming, and drums beating in all directions. A detachment of horse galloped off over the bridge, and along the road toward Newark, the only one of safety.

"Let them go," said Bryan; "let them go! I only pray they may fall in with old Willis's patrol. I heard all that passed to-day, and though you said 'to-morrow' night, I knew it must be to-night or never. Now I've got the Devil here, Heaven be praised!" (Bryan always re-

jected my horse's name of Satan with indignation; he said it was a Pagan's, not a Christian's name.) "I have got the Devil here behind the willows, and you'll ride along the river's side about a mile, (there's a swamp all the way between the road and you,) and then you'll see a blessed cross that I stuck up in the open space; and you'll swim the river there, where it stands, right across, and you'll land upon a common, where there's a horse-track, that you'll stick close to, and it will take you to a lane, and a narrow bridge, and then, hurrah! you're in shelter of Newark; and I warned them to have a strong picket out to watch for you. Never fear for me; I'm a poor lad with lodgings in yon village, and in half an hour, I'll be in through the window, and defy the whole Committee, and Cromwell to boot."

So he spoke, in a low, but exulting voice; just then the troopers halted on the road, and we could hear their officer exclaim, "No further than this could he have got. Dismount half-a-dozen of you, and try the meadow; 'look to your carbines, and don't spare powder."

We heard the arms of a dozen troopers ring as they leaped from their saddles, and approached us.

"We're safe still," whispered Bryan, crouching down, "for the villains can't pass the swamp. Steal on to the horse, and ride for the dear life—nay, never fear me, they'll think all's gone when they hear the Devil's hoofs along the meadow."

I pressed my faithful Bryan's hand in silence, and groped my way among the willows toward my last hopes of safety. My trusty guide accompanied me to the water's edge, and slung himself softly down beneath the bank. I then proceeded more cheerfully, and at length espied my gallant Satan's black form. The moment, however, that I touched him, the poor beast recognized me with a joyful neigh, and almost instantly half-a-dozen carbine bullets whistled among the willows. Then, as I galloped away, I could hear the splash of heavy bodies struggling in the swamp, crying loudly for assistance, while the troopers on the road forbore to fire for fear of shooting their own men.

For some time, I could hear my pursuers, now trampling along the road, now turning off upon the meadow, until some one of their number would flounder in the swamp, and then the trampling on the road began again. But I soon lost all hearing of them, as I plunged with my fearless horse into the river, and after a tough struggle for it, reached the opposite bank. Thence, following the appointed signs, I soon reached the lane, the bridge, and at length the grand old Castle of Newark.

There I obtained instant entrance, for my approach had been expected, and heard by the watchful warders. Byron, with one arm in a sling, was waiting to receive and welcome me, which he did with good grace, though evidently disturbed in the midst of conviviality.

"You-ov've saved us a jo-ob," he hiccupped out, as he led the way to the banqueting-hall; "for, to-morrow, (or to-day, I be-believe it is), we would have sto-orrred that cuck-cuckoldry castle of Notting'm about their cropop ears for them." Why, they were going to shoo-oat thee, man."

When we entered the fine old hall, its high rafters rang with the vociferous welcomes of

half-a-dozen Cavaliers who were drinking round a tremendous fire; as many more started up from benches where they had been dozing, and once more the rafters rang with welcomes, and shouts for the King, and imprecation on the Roundheads.

"But business,—business, my jolly messmates," said Philip Monckton, who was as drunk as any of them, but so accustomed to act under those circumstances, that he was fitter to do so. "Business, my roaring lads, must be first attended to. Old Willis is gone to meet this most worshipful and dripping lord, and we need recall him. Ho, you, sir," he continued to a staggering man-at-arms who seemed to officiate in the double capacity of butler and orderly; "get up to the tower and bid Fowler fire three falconets, one minute between each; do you hear? and see that the horse-boys are up and ready to take the horses of the picket when they return."

My friends now heard the narrative of Bryan's admirable arrangements and of my escape, with fresh applause. They hastened to produce for me, each from his own scanty wardrobe, some article that might replace the dripping garments that I wore. Nor was a cup of mulled sack forgotten, swallowed to the health of the brave harper. The staggering halberdier returned, and we heard the three pieces of artillery discharged.

"There they go," said the man, with the hiccupping voice of his superiors, "but t'others won't come, I doubt."

"And why not, thou drunken varlet?" stammered out Gerrard.

"Because they've got business on their hands, Sir, and they're hammering on the pates of the rebelly Roundheads."

"Ha! say you so?" cried Byron, starting to his feet, forgetting his wounded arm, as well apparently, as his intoxication: "let's to horse, then, gentlemen, and share the sport; the sick men, [and they are plenty], can keep the castle."

"With all my heart," I exclaimed, taking down from the wall the first sword I met, and all the Cavaliers echoed my rejoinder.

We soon found our way to the stables, each man girding himself up as best he might, on his way down stairs; some hastily buckled on a gorget or a haquetin, others mounted in their doublets. I found poor Satan just made comfortable, but he seemed eager for action, and was almost the first steed that was bestrode. It was reported to us that the skirmish could not be far off, as the firing was plainly heard, though the flashing of the fire-arms could not be seen through the darkness and the vapors of the night. As we rode apace, however, we soon heard confused noises, and at length met our Cavaliers with three or four prisoners captured in the brief skirmish.

I need not dwell further upon this incident. We returned in triumph to the castle, drank the King's health, and turned into our beds, after seeing our horses well cared for. The prisoners were committed only to the guard-room, and their horses led to the stalls, of which there were many vacant latterly, as skirmishes had been frequent.

The following morning, the prisoners were brought up before a council of war to be examined. Two of them were only musketeers, who

in their eagerness had mounted spare horses, in order to pursue. Among these I discovered my gaoler, and when I addressed him familiarly, he merely answered with downcast head and looks, "Yea, verily, it is captivity led captive, and my reputation as a turnkey is spoiled forever."

In answer to my question, he told me that the Governor could not sleep for what Cromwell had told him; that he had demanded the key of my cell at midnight, and proceeded thither with the big book from which he was wont to expound. Almost immediately afterward, however, the castle had been in an uproar; the turnkey first imprisoned, then set free upon examination; and finally, instant orders were given to pursue me. The horse pursued, having a vague impression, however, that I had escaped by witchcraft, as no trace of my means of escape had been discovered.

"Nay, more," continued the poor fellow, "one of our best troopers, who was afterward cut down, took his oath that he heard voices by the river side before he fired; one was speaking of the actual presence of the Enemy of Man!"

Without much difficulty, I procured this poor man's release, and dispatched him back to Nottingham, with a letter of warm thanks to Colonel Hutchinson for his courtesies. I even told him of the manner in which I had effected my escape, in order to clear him and all others of suspected complicity therein.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

The ditty does remember my dead father.

SHAKESPEARE

WHEN I awoke next morning, I found Bryan standing by my bed; the harp that had been so serviceable was in his hand. He told me, as carelessly as if he had been taking a walk for recreation, that when he reached his bed in the village inn the night before, he could not sleep, and he thought he might as well walk on here, especially as he knew that the road would be well cleared between the two parties of horse, whichever had the best of it.

"And now tell me," said I, "where learned you your harp minstrelsy; for I almost doubted it was you when I saw you and heard you play upon that instrument?"

"Ah," said he, "you know not how dear is the harp to an Irishman, or how natural it comes to him to touch those strings," (as he swept his own over them,) "every one of which has its fellow in his own wild heart. I believe that David loved it because the angels" (and he crossed himself) "use it, and surely its notes are more like the voice of spirits than any earthly music is. Hear this!" he cried with enthusiasm, as he sank upon one knee, and conjured up from among the harp-strings such an exquisite wild passionate dirge as I never heard before. It seemed to search the very depths of the heart, and, thrilling there, awakened unknown sympathies, and brought the tears into my eyes unconsciously. Now deep and low, like the sound of far-distant wailing, with here and there a shriller note of bursting woe; and nearer and louder the sorrow seemed to come, and then was hushed. Before the strings had ceased to vibrate, the music recommenced in solemn tones, like chanted

prayer, and then abruptly ceased, but only for a moment, for soon it soared away into the very wildest numbers, as if it were collecting all the memories of the mourned dead—now loud and jubilant, as if in triumph—now soft, and low, and tender, as if in whispered and happy love.

The harp ceased. "That," said he, "is the first music I ever learned; it's the coronach that was made for my father's funeral. It was taught me by an old harper that our pirates caught, and kept to play for them on Rachlin Island, long ago. I had almost forgotten it, but it has come back to me, note by note, when I've been lying ill, as if spirits brought it to me. Well—as I was saying—I learned harp music from the best harper of the West until I was fourteen; when our pirates were taken and hanged, and I was saved because I was so young, and tried to save the old harper. He was set on shore, and I lived for many a day with the captain of the frigate, afloat and ashore, like his own son; and if he loved me, it was for the sake of the music that I made him. Well—rest his soul—he's gone; and I had nothing left me but the harp he gave me, and with that harp I was to pay my way to America, where I hoped to make my way in the world as soon as I became a man. But a kinder fate awaited me, and saved me by your honor's hand, and from that hour I have known no sorrow except yours."

He took my hand and pressed it to his lips.

"But one thing, they used to vex me about at Beaumanoir, and that was about my Irishry, as they used to call it; and they used to pretend they wondered I hadn't got a tail, and a long knife, or a harp at least.*

"And so I began to think that the harp would be an offense to you. But I found this poor thing (and he laid his hand affectionately on his harp) weeks after the wreck upon the shore, and I cured its hurts as best I could, and I was wont to play by the hour on the lonely shore, till the fishermen swore they used to hear mermaids singing there. And when I thought I'd be wanted at the house, I used to hide my poor Irish harp away among the rocks, where I made a bed of rushes for it. When I followed you to the wars, I left it, in my haste, behind me; but the Lady Zillah (the only one who knew of it, and used to listen to it) had it sent after me to Oxford. And I still had the idea that it would be Irish, and hateful to you, so I kept it secret still. But after the battle of Newbury, when I was lying ill for near a month, I took to it again, and the people near me got so fond of it, that I thought I'd make use of it in making my way to you, and so I did. For when poor Blount came back to Oxford, (and who can tell how he made his way there through the enemy, for he has more of the lion than the fox in him, good man), and told us he left you prisoner, they tried to exchange you against any two prisoners the rebels had; but some devilment made them refuse, and then the Prince swore he'd come and raze the castle to the ground, but he was obliged to wait till spring. So I got leave, and started in search of you, and the Prince called me Blondel, or

some such name, and swore he'd have me knighted if I got you free; and I swore that if I didn't I'd never see his face again; and away Blount and I traveled.

"We had hardship and danger enough sometimes, but we got to the house of an honest man near Nottingham, a farmer that Blount used to buy hay from, for the troop; and he gave us shelter. Well, Blount would go on to Beaumanoir, for, said he, 'I must do the master's bidding at all risks, and I daren't see his face again until I do it.' So he went away home with his prisoner's pass, and I didn't tell him what I heard, that you were ill of fever; but I wrote it on a scrap of paper to the Lady Zillah. And I told her you'd be lost if she couldn't come to you, and that I had found the way to the chapel, close by to your prison, and that I would be there every night after dark.

"Well, blessings on her heart, she came to the castle, and I saw her in the same chapel, and we had all things prepared for your escape the night of the storm. Indeed, I believe, if the truth was known, the Governor's lady was not sorry to be rid of you; for she suspected some foul play from that villain, Hezekiah, who was always hovering about you like a raven; and she knew that an order for your release was signed long ago. You know the rest."

So ended Bryan's story. I then told him everything relating to my altered circumstances, and concluded by informing him that for good or ill, I was determined to revisit that which was once my home. Bryan declared that such was his best wish, too, and that he never would return to Oxford until I did; come weal or woe.

"Nothing is easier," he exclaimed with animation, "than to get home, at all events. I've got the knack of the people's ear now, with this old harp and some psalmody that's growing almost as dear to me as to them, only I'm obliged to put it a little through my nose when I sing the words. Now, I think, your honor must leave that most excellent Devil here; for he's too handsome, and besides might get killed on us; and as we're in no great hurry, sure we can walk the distance easy in three nights. And once we get in sight of the old woods of home—whoo! I'd like to see the Roundhead that can lay hands on us!"

So it was settled and so done. Our jovial and generous cavaliers of Newark did everything that kindness could dictate: more than one of them was anxious to accompany me, but of course I declined their offer.

It was on a fine frosty afternoon, on Christmas Eve, that we began our expedition. Bryan was dressed as when he entered Nottingham; I, in a forester's rough garb, which was well suited to the weather and our walk. I pass over the various incidents of our march as uninteresting to the reader, though to us then seeming very important. Bryan gave himself out as old General Lesley's own harper, and none of those who entertained us were able or anxious to detect any error in the musician's assumed Scottish accent. I carried his harp, whenever we entered a village, during daylight; and for his sake, I always received rough and homely but kind welcome from the cottagers.

At length, with a heavy heart, I saw the dawn break over the tall woods behind the stately old house that I so long called my home. As we advanced, I saw the sea, and then the turreted

* In the "State of Ireland," dedicated to Queen Elizabeth in 1599, among the matters requiring "reformation," we find the forbidden "maintainings of Irish harpers, bardes, and the like, in the Pale, proving that the Irish behaviour is too perfectly learned."—*Vide Sir John Harrington's Nuga Antiqua*, p. 141.

roof rising between it and me. I was already in my boyish haunts; I could soon see those of my feeble childhood. Nothing seemed changed! A slight shower of snow had fallen during the morning, and veiled all vestiges of ruin. We still walked boldly on until we reached the verge of the wood, whence a wide undulating lawn sloped downward to the house.

There we paused. My eyes were dry; for my grief was too solemn for tears, as I looked out upon the scenes where I was now a trespasser. The spot where my mother lay tranquilly at rest; the place where my brave brother had fallen in defending what was to him his home!

Looking up to the right, my eyes wandered over the steep woods, and rested on the castle tower where Zillah slept,—slept, I hoped, then forgot her earthly sorrows in her heavenly dreams.

I looked at Bryan, he was on his knees; his eyes were full of tears, and he seemed praying heartily. He was a Papist, poor fellow, and able to comfort himself by praying for the souls of the departed.

Suddenly he started to his feet,—dashed the weakness from his eyes, and exclaimed it was time to be going. It was a moment or two before I could realize the idea of danger there,—on the very spot where my pale mother used to sit and watch the sunset lights upon the sea. But the sun was now shining brightly over the snow, and Roundhead wardens on the turrets below were casting their first cautious glances round them.

We moved away noiselessly to the right, higher up the glen, and in about a quarter of an hour we came in sight of the cottage where Blount's old father had lived, as forester, for more than half a century. Bryan advanced cautiously, singing one of Sternhold's undelightful melodies very nasally. The sound seemed to be unpalatable to the cottagers, for almost immediately Blount's bearded face appeared in anger at the window, uttering angrier words. But the singer went on, and was soon recognized, and pulled inside the door, which was closed behind him with a hearty bang.

Soon after he returned, and alone, for me. My sturdy servant was standing in the shadow of his house, blubbing like a child, and trying to swear at his wife, who, with a Frenchwoman's readiness and address, advanced to welcome me. Blount, poor fellow, had no welcome to offer; his tough heart was too full. I shook him vehemently by the hand, and entered the little apartment where they lived; there I found the old father as upright as his age-bowed form would permit, with both his hands outstretched to greet me.

An hour afterward, Blount was to be seen with a face grinning joyfully, bustling about to make things comfortable for me. At one moment, he was trying to assist his wife Rosine in preparing an excellent breakfast—correcting her bad English in worse French, and swearing at, and blessing her, alternately. Then he would rush at a large oak chest, and tumble out all the old linen to look for sheets, shirts, everything that I could want. And at length when I was fairly seated at a savory mess of stewed rabbits, and he had nothing else to do, he took down his well-battered carbine, and began to look it over,

as if it must come into immediate use. He seemed to think that I was there for the sole purpose of storming the Manor House and restoring everything to its old footing.

"I'm afeared though," said he reluctantly, "we must wait till night. Though there's only a score or so of them, these rebels keep a sharp watch, and know how to defend themselves. But the moat's froze over, and that's a great thing; and Simnel is just come back from Lincoln with one of his ale barrels full of powder, and that's a great thing—and, in about two hours' muster, we can put together—let me see, ay, fifty men, as good as ever trailed a pike. Pooh! we'll have your honor at breakfast in the oak parlor to-morrow morning, as easy as ask for it."

While the zealous trooper thus went on, I confess a temporary gleam of hope had passed through my mind. I did not, indeed, doubt for a moment that we could recover possession of the old house. But then I knew how vainly! The whole country round was in the hands of the rebels, and another fight would only expose my people to still greater distress than they had already suffered for us. Alas! my people did I say? Well! in my heart of hearts they will be always mine.

Bryan watched my countenance eagerly, as these thoughts passed through my mind, and gradually his hopeful looks subsided into sorrow and regret.

"My trusty Blount," said I, "I am not come to disturb such quiet as this poor country can enjoy. Nor have I, except as the King's officer, any right to do so now. But Bryan will tell you all about it, and meantime I would fain rest an hour or two in those white sheets that your wife has so pleasantly arranged on yonder bed."

And so saying, I retired to an inner room; as much to spare myself the pain of seeing Blount during the explanation with Bryan that was to follow as to rest.

CHAPTER XL.

When need is highest
Hope is nighest.

OLD PROVERB.

WITH all his fidelity, Blount had been always rather a willful and wayward personal attendant; but now, when I came forth from my welcome rest, I found him respectfully and almost tenderly officious. He did not trust himself to speak, but in his own rough way he showed his feeling for my fallen state, by a service that was almost homage.

Nor had he and the indefatigable Bryan been idle whilst I slept: the former had been snaring rabbits (an old trick of his), and the latter inveigled a dish of trout out of the brook, frosty as it was. The Roundheads had so harried the few loyal country people, that there was little other food to be had; Blount's new wife, as he called her, possessed a French woman's admirable talent, however, in turning wild herbs to a good account, and I supped royally.

Nor was good ale wanting, wherewith to wash it down. Blount, an old campaigner, had pilied his summer's soldiering with some advantages; and though he was wise enough to keep

his little store of gold a secret, his friend Simnel seldom visited the country-town without bringing back some comfort to cheer the trooper's home and his father's old age.

Now,—after as much experience as most men, of the vicissitudes of life,—I am convinced that a man in difficulties can only take a fair view of his situation, and of its chances, after his appetite has been satisfied. When the bodily functions are tranquillized, the mental are at liberty to act solely for themselves, and to look the strong world boldly in the face. I therefore set myself to think, steadily and almost complacently, after I had well supped; and when my humble friends, with ready tact, had retired into the adjoining apartment, and left me to my own company over a pipe of good tobacco, and a brown jug of foaming ale.

It may appear strange to the romantic reader, that I should have been able to enjoy such things then, or that I can dwell upon them now: those, however, who have seen as much of the outside and inside of worldly affairs as I have done, will not think these trifling matters unnatural, or even inconsistent. I must now, however, beg him to accompany me to very different scenes and personages from those of my humble cottage.

Scarcely half-a-mile away, across the brook, and beyond the wooded steep, rose the proud towers of a castle looking loftily down upon many a glade and woodland, sloping to the sea. But about the castle there were many signs of neglect, if not of decay; grass was growing where grass was never meant to grow; rails and fences were overthrown; the marks of cattle hoofs had almost effaced the trim gardens, once sacred to ladies' feet; everywhere was visible the withdrawal of the master's eye and care. The day's brief sunshine had in part effaced the snow; it only lay about in streaks of dreary white, on which the laurels and yews looked dismally black as daylight gave way to January's disconsolate twilight.

By the side of the broad avenue leading to the castle, was a leafless arbor formed under an old beech tree. Beneath its scanty shelter stood a muffled figure gazing intently upon a lighted window looking eastward toward the arbor. Some powerful emotions were at work within him, for that large frame trembled whenever a shadow from those inside the house passed across the window's light.

That within—that arch-paneled room—was well remembered. It has been, in turn, the nursery, the school-room, and the bower of two of England's loveliest daughters. It was once enriched with flowers, and all bright ornaments prepared in hours of ingenious idleness by fanciful fingers. But now it looked almost as forlorn as the outward aspect of the castle; and of those within, the beauty, though still beautiful, is grown sad and sorrowful. One wears a noble yet delicate form; slender yet finely developed and symmetrical. An indescribable, harmonious grace surrounds her, from the rich, dark hair bound round her marble brows, to the hem of the dark robe that swept the inlaid floor. Her cheeks were wondrous pale, and the light of her large, lustrous eyes with the shadow of their long, drooping lashes, increased the spiritual character of the countenance. But then there was a roseate mouth and dimpled chin that were

sweetly mortal, and which, though saddened now, could surely bring forth delighting and delighted smiles for sunny hours.

The other sister's form and face seemed meant altogether for mirth and happiness; yet 'twas now the most mournful, and by far the most melancholy of the two. Those violet eyes, once sparkling with joyful fancies, were dimmed and sunken. Those auburn ringlets, that used to curl so richly round the rosy cheek, are now drooping and lusterless, and that cheek is very wan. Poor Phoebe sits at Zillah's feet, and rests her aching head upon her sister's knee, watching earnestly the workings of the countenance that shines above her, and apparently endeavoring to derive strength from its inspiration.

Those two poor girls are motherless now. She whom they had lost had not perhaps very numerous sympathies with her children, but with the blessed name of mother everything on earth that is holiest and tenderest is inseparably combined, especially when she is gone; and nothing can supply her place. Soon after our house had been stormed, when its new Roundhead garrison had begun to levy severe contributions on all around them, she had fallen ill. The reputed share of her husband in Waller's plot afforded an excuse for every species of annoyance and spoliation of his family: day by day, the good lady's cherished stores of household linen and worsted stuffs—even her poultry and her fatted lambs, were claimed and carried off by the insatiable troopers. The poor housewife-heart of the lady was rent and torn by these spoliations—this ruin of a life-long industry and pride. She succumbed to her sickness, and when she died, she had scarcely enough left of all her once boasted linen to make her a shroud.

And now Sir Janus appeared to be suffering sorely under the same system of extortion. Fear long kept him a prisoner in his chamber, and all his remaining energies had been employed, it was whispered, in hiding away his more ponderous valuables, and transmitting his available funds to foreign countries. He now only waited for an opportunity to abandon the castle, of which he had been so vain; and he would gladly have exchanged it all, from cellar to topmost turret, for a safe berth on board of the meanest fishing smacks, at good gunshot from the shore. A vessel had been actually chartered for him at Hull, but somehow those whom this cautious gentleman employed were never earnest in his service. His money order had indeed been obeyed, and a strong pinnacle had anchored off the river's mouth that morning; but of her three sailors—two declared themselves Puritans, on finding a Roundhead garrison, with plenty of wine, at Beaumanoir, and declared they would sail nowhere without Governor Hewson's orders.

Such was the name of the Roundhead officer who commanded the neighboring districts, and who valued Sir Janus's resources too much to part with them as long as he could help it. In answer, therefore, to a polite message from Sir Janus, requesting him to make the sailors fulfill their engagement, Hewson returned answer that he must first consult the Parliament, and learn their pleasure, before he could consent to the departure of so esteemed and valued a member of the good cause. On receiving this answer, Sir Janus had betaken himself, as usual, to his own apartment and solitude. And his two daughters,

forbidden to interrupt his meditation, were consoling each other as best they might. They were both even more anxious to depart than their father was, for their fears were far greater than his own. Colonel Hewson had intimated his conviction that Castle Bifrons would be the better for a small garrison of the godly, and this was the last evening that their home might be free from such intrusion.

The old chaplain had walked down to the village to hear the news, and the poor maidens having compared all their fears and hopes of escaping, their low mournful voices had now subsided into silence.

Suddenly Zillah started, and listened with breathless suspense and almost awe. At length she whispered to her sister:

"Dost thou remember the strange weird stories that Irish boy used to tell us—of spirits that made mournful music in the air, when the ruin of some ancient house impended? Hark! again those supernaturally wild and wailing notes—the very voice of Bryan's Banshee!*

Phoebe had now started to her feet, and was likewise listening, with all the feverish eagerness of long-suppressed and returning hope.

"To me," she said, "there is nothing doleful—but absolute cheer in those wild strains. Ah! Zillah, do you not recognize them now?"

Zillah replied by opening the casement. The music ceased, but the rustling of boughs was heard beneath the window, and soon the active form of Bryan was seen clinging to the window seat—the next moment he was in the room.

Half an hour had passed, he had much to tell; for, by my directions, he had told all. He concluded thus: "We arrived this morning at old Blount's cottage in the glen below; and, though my Lord lay close all day, we heard, at nightfall, that the rebels had got tidings of him, and would harry the whole estate before morning, or they would find him. Now, tell me, Lady, is your father capable of making one bold effort to save you and himself from these marauding villains? I know all about him and the pinnacle, and everything. There's one true loyal man aboard of her, and I've made friends with him; his two comrades are up at the manor, swilling the good old wine that's fit for princes. Now, if you, and those that are to accompany you, can be down within the hour, by the Black-rock, where the water's deep—you, and my Lord, and all, are saved forever. Nothing is easier; my Lord and I can manage the craft with the pilot already aboard of her, and by Heaven's favor and good guiding, we shall be half-way to Holland before day."

The feasibility of this project was evident, as well as the necessity for its instant execution. Zillah felt so strongly the contagious power of the young Irishman's cheerful confidence, that she determined to let him try the same influence upon her father. She knew the old man would be startled by such a sudden and bold measure; and if Bryan's light-hearted and confident manner failed to inspire courage, she knew that all must be in vain. Notwithstanding all prohibition, therefore, she entered her father's chamber, and to his great astonishment, led Bryan with her.

* Lady Fanshawe, in her delightful *Memoirs*, gives an interesting account of this Milesian appendage, during her visit to Ireland, a few years after our Cavalier is writing.

"Your pardon, Sir Janus," said the young man, "but I had business of such importance with you, that I thought I'd venture to intrude; and indeed it won't be long before the rebels—the gentlemen I mean at the Manor down there—will be paying you a more unceremonious visit. In short, Sir Janus, they hear that you've secreted a whole pot of gold; and, as all things are given to the saints, they think that all that you've kept from them is wrong and robbery. Now you see, my Lord and I are going to escape in the pinnacle below there, which nobody else seems inclined to make use of; but as you paid for her, I thought it would be no more than courteous to inquire if you had any commands to make, or any little valuable to send to a place of safety."

During this address, poor Sir Janus listened with open-mouthed astonishment; the cool, daring manner of the lad impressed him favorably, however, and he replied almost without anger:

"But, young man, this pinnacle that you speak of is mine—purchased by my money; ay, and at no trifling risk."

"Then why, in St. Peter's name," exclaimed Bryan, "don't you go to sea in her and escape; if not for your own sake, for that of the ladies here. Nothing is easier now. The rebels are all busy at the Manor, collecting their forces for a grand expedition in search of some 'malignants' that are lurking hereabouts. In an hour's time, the tide will ebb, the shallow will be waiting at the Black Rock; you and yours may be all aboard before the moon rises; then,—whoop!—who dare follow us? Come along, Sir," said he, improving his advantage, "pull on these old boots, and look, here is a quiet doublet, and you may as well stick the bandolier over it; ay, and the rapier, to look respectable; and here's your big cloak and hat; and now search out your papers and whatever's most valuable to you; and take no servant but old Sturdy, he's the only true man in your household."

Sir Janus yielded to Bryan's energy, and in sheer timidity took the boldest step he had ever ventured on. His daughters, of higher mettle, eagerly set about making their preparations, and in less than an hour Bryan joined me, with the assurance that all would be ready for our departure. "Except the poor Chaplain," he added; "for the old man swears he will not forsake the remnant of the people committed to his charge. He told the ladies that they were going, he trusted, to a land of sound doctrine, as well as of temporal safety; but for the children of our Church, here," said he, "who shall comfort them? Nay, I will abide with them, and finish my pilgrimage where I have begun it. There is no fear for me, dear Lady: alas! I am not worthy to be admitted to martyrdom. Even those who are not of my flock will reverence my gray hairs, though, in their ignorance, they revile my sacred calling."

There was no time for further parley between Bryan and me. When the castle clock told nine, we were to embark, and Bryan had first to repair to the pinnacle to make final arrangements with her pilot, and to bring her little shallop to the appointed place. She could only hold three persons at a time; and as the sea was rising, and the night was looking wild, we had one hour of deep anxiety and doubt before us.

I returned in all haste to Blount's cottage: he

was already gone to the Black Rock with such small necessities as I required. I shook hands with his old father, and wished him better days. I threw a gold chain round Rosine's neck, and told her it was all I had to offer her.

"Farewell, then," said I; "you shall have your husband back within the hour, I trust."

"No, my good Lord," said the old man, in a solemn but a firm voice; "she will not see him back to-night, or, perhaps, ever again. He is yours and the King's; and my curse would be on him—even as my heart's blessing is with him now—if he turned back, and that, he will never do!"

I was deeply touched, nay, awed by the old man's resigned and heroic manner. He had evidently taken what he considered a last leave of his last, his only child, and devoted him to his duty with a cheerful sacrifice. But he was trembling with feelings that overpowered him, and after one more grasp of his hand, I spared him a further witness of his struggle, and hastened away.

CHAPTER XLI.

Loather a hundred times to part than die;
Yet now, farewell—and farewell life with thee!

SHAKESPEARE.

OUR escape had been planned with all possible secrecy and dispatch; and I soon found that Blount's anxious care for my safety had not rested there. As soon as I had passed the river into the castle grounds, I heard the snatch of a well-known Cavalier roundelay, and about a score of our former tenants, all stalwart and well-armed men, suddenly presented themselves before me. Their affectionate reception of their disinherited master was painful to me as I was thus circumstanced; but Blount, at the moment, joined us, and forbade all noise or explanation.

"The rebels are in motion," he whispered; "and I believe they have left the Manor already. Well, we've one-and-twenty firelocks here, and I doubt not we can beat back five score of such fellows as come yonder. Nevertheless, to save risk, we must be silent. The ladies are all on board, and the shallop will be back by this."

So saying, he moved away at a rapid pace; I followed closely, and the volunteers brought up the rear. I had vainly entreated them to disperse to their homes; they replied that they dared not, if they would ever wish to show their faces amongst their kin again.

We were now approaching the shore; the woods ceased suddenly to screen our hasty march; and a long narrow strip of gravel only intervened between the sea and an overhanging range of cliffs. Along this we now moved swiftly and noiselessly; the night was almost quite dark; and the moaning of the waves, before they dashed upon the shore, drowned the noise of our footsteps. A few faint stars shone out between the driving clouds, and showed us at length the Black Rock; but there was no boat to be seen there. Still on we went; when suddenly the cliffs above us blazed with a volley of musketry, and two of my poor fellows dropped beside me.

"On, on," shouted Blount, "there's shelter nigh."

And on we went till we found ourselves under

the protection of an overhanging rock, round which the bullets shot fast, but harmlessly, into the wet sand. Another quarter of an hour, and escape would be in vain; the sands are left suddenly bare along this coast after the first hour of ebb, and it is only at some distance that the lightest craft can float.

I thought of poor Bryan's feelings with anguish. His reluctance to leave me; his responsibility to the precious freight he had on board; his remaining perhaps too long, and finding his boat stranded, while the pinnacle would be left with no second hand to guide her when we had fallen; as these thoughts flashed rapidly through my mind, I saw the shallop shoot from behind the Black Rock, as if to show itself, and then retire. Now was my time or never; the rebels were pouring down the cliff, and would soon surround us. Once more I implored, nay, commanded my men to retire and leave me, as my last chance of safety. At length they reluctantly obeyed; but as if to prove they did so from no coward fear, instead of returning homeward, they dashed up the almost inaccessible cliff, and I soon heard their muskets ringing on the heights.

Nor was their diversion of the enemy's attention without result. The greater part of those who were descending to the shore now scrambled back again to join their assailed comrades, evidently supposing that I had led that charge in person. Blount and I took advantage of the momentary pause, and rushed across the open space toward the boat; three Roundheads attempted to withstand us, but they fell, and we cleared the rock. By this time a young moon had risen, and showed us that numbers of the people had assembled on the shore—the friends and followers of both parties, women as well as men.

"Now," shouted a voice from the shallop, as it shot in beneath my feet.

Just as I was descending, two powerful men rushed up to us; one closed with me; Blount encountered the other. A stroke from Bryan's ear left me without an enemy, and at the same moment Blount gave a shout of triumph—but it was a faint one—as his enemy also fell. The gallant fellow then tottered toward me, exclaimed, "God bless—" and fell lifeless there.

I scarcely knew what happened afterward. A roar of musketry I recollect; and Blount's brave honest head upon my knee, and then a woman's shriek, which I remembered long, long afterward. I believe Bryan lifted me into his boat; I was too stupefied with grief to be conscious, until roused by the spell of Zillah's voice.

And now the helm is down, and our pinnacle, laid close to the wind, is standing boldly out to sea. The night is looking wild to windward; the sea is still rising, and the little craft bounding onward gallantly, but as if it was an effort to her. The spray now bathes the deck at every plunge, and the ladies and all the useless hands are persuaded to go below. The night looks angrier as the hours wear on, but my thoughts are still with that sad sea-shore, where the loyal and the true have died for me—where my poor Blount has found that there are eyes, after all, that will weep for him.

Poor, desolate Rosine!—after all thy faithful following, thou art there to perform that office for thy rugged, but noble-hearted soldier; to shed the tear that his tough heart in a moment of weakness yearned for. Nor will thy sorrow be

alone! That brave old sire will mourn heavily, but proudly, for his true-hearted son. And when his gray head is laid beside him, as I trust full soon it may be, thou, poor wife, mayest wander back to thy far home beyond the seas—proud and happy to thy last hour that thou hast such a husband to remember—and to meet again.

* * * * *

Our bark bounds boldly on—through stormier winds and seas. We hand sail after sail, and reef to our last points, and we have but shreds and canvas now straining to the gale. Every man, save him at the helm, is crouched to windward under the weather-boards, except at the moment when to tack requires every hand and nerve. The sea rolls in over our decks, and sends its spray aloft, high over our masts; but still the little bark, true English heart of oak, rides onward bravely into the very teeth of the tempest; and the three storm-beaten figures that guide her, look often into the careering clouds ahead, but never backward toward the fatal shore that was their home.

Still onward we drive, until a blazing fire, lately visible on our lee, has sunk below the horizon; and then we calculate we are out of sight of land, and steer our straight course for Helvoetsluys; the wind is now upon our quarter; our gallant little bark now seems to fly; and when the longed-for daylight breaks at last gloriously over the waters, the storm seems to fail and die away before it. Then, as with easy and gratified movement we swept along over the subsiding swell, we had opportunity to offer each in his own heart's fashion, our thanksgiving for all the perils we had been permitted to survive.

Another hour, and the sea was calmer still, and the deck was dry, and Zillah and Phoebe were reposing thereon side by side: Sir Janus still preferred his seclusion; and the servants, as is their wont, were sick to death, in the fore-castle. The wearied pilot now readily obtained leave to take some rest; Bryan went forward to look out, and I was left at the helm, alone with the two sisters.

One look was sufficient for Zillah's greeting; but I shook Phoebe's hand with a brother's fervency—and forgiveness. Then followed many questions, and at length, the sad story of the previous night. Zillah wept in silence for poor Blount, but Phoebe, to my surprise, listened without a tear; and when I ceased speaking, she exclaimed,—

"Oh! how I envy him; how I envy even that poor lone woman, who could press his dead body to her faithful heart, and say, 'it was true to him to the last. . . ?' Alas! it is only the true-hearted who deserve the happiness of dying for those they love!"

Zillah did not interrupt her sister; but after some short silence she said, with a sad, sweet smile, "Comfort yourself, dear Phoebe, it may yet be our lot; we all have something left to love, to live—and if necessary, to die for. But we will not speak of that just now. Does it not seem as if yester-evening had receded into a year's distance. Twelve hours ago we were sitting calmly and despondingly in the window, and that harp sounded, and a rapid succession of fearful scenes followed; it is now as difficult to recall them as a dream. But that terrible moment, when they began to fire from the cliffs upon you, and when all appeared to be lost—that mo-

ment seems to expand itself until it oppresses all other recollection."

I was deeply gratified to observe that Zillah now avoided as much as possible the Puritanical form of speech, which used to be as it were another language;—a Babel by which Hezekiah had contrived to confound our once happy intercourse.

"Thank Heaven!" I exclaimed, "amongst all we leave behind us, that dark-browed fanatic is also left, upon the soil he has so ably assisted to distract."

Zillah looked grave; she was silent too, and she did not meet my eyes. But soon she entered into confidential and most pleasant discourse on all that had passed since we had parted; even to the last words of the old Chaplain who had waited on them to the boat.

Bryan suddenly interrupted our conversation, with a cry of "down with the helm, and throw her up into wind; there's one of Warwick's cruiser's off the blue line of shore, and if they're as much awake as we are, we shall have a hard run for it." Whilst he was thus speaking, he had kicked up the weary pilot, and jumped aft to haul in the sheets; the next moment, he was up aloft—handing our small topsail, and having made all snug, he resumed his watch with an earnest and unblinking gaze. Our small, low craft had fortunately escaped the cruiser's observation, and we were soon able to resume our right course.

That day we received no further alarm. The time flew but too fast. I almost grudged the hour that Bryan whiled away with the sweet music of his harp. The next morning found us in sight of the low coast of Holland, but considerably farther north than we had intended. Before dark we had run into the little fishing village of Schevening, near the Hague, and disembarked our precious freight.

We easily found hardy sailors to help us to lay up the little craft in safety. I expected to wait her again ere long, and Sir Janus, in his delight at finding himself and his wealth secured, enabled me to reward her faithful owner beyond his highest hopes.

CHAPTER XLII.

Holland, that scarce deserves the name of land,
As but the offscouring of the British sand,
And so much earth as was contributed
By English pilots when they heaved the lead;
Or what by th' ocean's slow alluvion fell
Of shipwrecked cockle and the muscle shell.

ANDREW MARVELL.

* * * * *

A land that rides at anchor and is moored,
In which one does not dwell, but goes "on board."
BUTLER.

THAT evening we procured a light wagon to transport our passengers and freight to the Hague, and had soon the comfort of finding ourselves in one of the best and cleanest inns in the world. I need not describe the gratitude we felt for our deliverance and restoration, and security and comfort: the poor frightened ladies especially; for I fear that a long succession of hair-breadth escapes had rendered Bryan, and even myself, less thankful for and observant of such blessings than we might have been.

The Hague is called "the largest *village* in the world," containing more inhabitants and greater wealth than many cities of repute. It maintains, however, a sort of village character for gossip and idleness, engendered by the absence of all municipal institutions and occupations that keep citizens busied about their own affairs. Originally a hunting-seat,* it seems still a sort of chase, where every Dutchman comes to hunt out whatever he wants; honors, water-works, fashions, preferment, and above all, news—are the principal objects of pursuit; the sportsmen are unexcitable but indefatigable, and the game, though small of its kind, is very plentiful.

England, and English news, at the time of our visit, possessed the greatest interest. The Dutch were curious to learn how their Puritanical and Republican doctrines fared; they were anxious to know how their investments of capital were turning out, for in this they had a double interest, having lent money to both parties. Public feeling, or opinion, I should rather call it, was pretty equally divided between our two contending armies. All those who sided with the Prince of Orange, sided with our King; all those of the opposite party leaned toward the Roundheads. But none of them seemed inclined to carry matters to the extremes, and the repose that was apparent in this matter formed a most pleasant contrast with the excited feelings that then divided England. The Dutch impartiality in one respect was marvelous. Justice herself was never less a respecter of persons, or more blind to prejudices, than the Dutch magnates to the cause of those that borrowed, provided the security were good. At one hour, Mynheer Jan Van Dyke was advancing fifty thousand pounds on the crown jewels to provide powder for our King; the next hour, in the same office, Mynheer Peter, his brother, was signing an undertaking to provide cannon and shot for the Close Committee.

Among such people, the arrival of our party created a considerable sensation. Public rumor magnified my presence into a confidential mission from the King; private conviction, founded on the deposit of certain weighty packages at the great goldsmith's, greeted Sir Janus as a grand plenipotentiary from the Parliament. That we should both dwell in the same inn and even have arrived in the same vessel, appeared little extraordinary to the tolerant and phlegmatic Hollanders. Wonderful anecdotes concerning our departure from England had gradually risen from our pilot, through the fishermen of Schevening, up to the Court. Bryan, who was by far the most accessible of our party, amused himself with enhancing and embarrassing these marvels; and at length the interest of both Court and Exchange became concentrated on our inn.

Not only the known wealth of Sir Janus, and my supposed prowess and great importance, but an interest, more deeply-seated still, even among the amphibious Dutchmen, enhanced all this. A report of the wondrous beauty of the two English ladies had gone abroad and agitated all the Gräfs and Gräfinn, as violently as their nature would permit. Henceforth crowds beset our dwelling, and numerous visitors disturbed the happiest period I had ever known.

* In the Dutch 'Sgravenhage, or the "Count's Hedge," which fenced round the hunter's house.

For as long as the sense of danger was still tingling in Sir Janus's memory, he thought he could never see me near enough; the strangeness of his new life to him, and the loneliness he felt in the presence of unaccustomed chairs and tables, made him still anxious for my society, even when he was at length convinced of personal safety. Therefore, I lived almost entirely in Zillah's company, which every hour became to me more precious. Then I discovered how deeply her high and ardent intellect had been imbued with the noblest errors of the Puritans. So purified and exalted, however, had they become in passing through the medium of her mind, that I could have almost become a convert to them myself. At least I then learnt toleration for all who possessed such principles as Zillah had consecrated by her approval and adoption.

Yet still this singular woman, though she treated me with perfect confidence, had the power to keep me at a distance. A thousand little sympathies that it would have been happiness to share with her were acknowledged but not fostered. Ofttimes a burst of feeling rose upon her lips, but died unuttered there; oftentimes an emotion, common to us both, would fill her eyes with tears and make her very heart-throbbing visible; but it was soon mastered or suppressed.

I know not how I might have felt, or what I might have done, had I still been the Lord of a dozen manors, but as I was now circumstanced, I was diffident even to timidity. I was too happy to be allowed to remain, even in that probationary state, and I thought with bitterness on the fast-approaching hour that was to recall me to England and my loyal duty.

So it fared with me for the first few days after our arrival at the Hague. Sir Janus had not sufficient energy; I had not sufficient inducement to leave the house. Bryan alone was indefatigably restless; never weary of examining the strange people and their customs and places of business, and haunts of pleasure. In a wonderfully short space of time he had learned some of their language, and made for himself so many acquaintances that he never used the table of the inn.

But the change of scene and freedom from anxiety soon wrought a surprising change in Sir Janus, and through him, in all our circle. Pleased and flattered on finding himself a personage of curiosity and attention, he began to frequent the public walks, at first in company with me, and at length unattended. From returning salutes, he gradually came to converse with such of the wealthy merchants as understood our language, and at length he accepted an invitation to dine with a rich goldsmith, to whom he had brought letters of large credit, as well as sterling coin for investment. This was the first day I dined alone, but afterward, I discovered that my society had ceased to be necessary to Sir Janus. He returned from his dinner with a large acquaintance, which increased rapidly, and soon left me but a moderate share of his attention. His daughters, however, refused to see any strangers on account of mourning for their mother, and I was to both of them, therefore, at least as welcome a companion as ever.

Phoebe had profited almost as much as her father had done, by change of air and scene, and her joyous youthful spirit began sometimes to

peep through her melancholy, like snow-drops through the snow. She strove especially to win my confidence, and need I say that she succeeded; I could cherish no feelings toward her but pity, tolerance for her childish folly, and sorrow for the part that she had played. I resumed toward her my old demeanor, and she grew daily cheerfulness and brighter, and more like herself.

One afternoon, while Sir Janus was strutting up and down in the public walk, I was sitting with his daughters in the window of our common room, observing and commenting on his different acquaintances. Zillah, however, soon retired to her embroidery frame, and I had followed her with my eyes, when I observed Phoebe start and point with an alarmed look toward her father. He seemed as if he had trodden upon a rattlesnake, and was restrained from moving by some fascinated fear. One foot was retired and his cane was in the air, but so he remained, motionless, gazing on a low seat that was unoccupied as it seemed to me. But suddenly what seemed to be a human head appeared from behind it, grinning delightedly at the alarm it had caused, and giving vent to its feelings in shrill exclamations of "keek, keek, keek."

At this moment, my attention was distracted by the entrance of a servant, who announced a visitor under the title of Captain Van Bed-tick. He was immediately followed by a fine soldier-like looking officer, dressed in the Dutch fashion, and of eminently courteous manners. After a profoundly respectful salutation toward Zillah and Phoebe as they withdrew, he addressed himself to me frankly in very good English, and told me that he was one of the Prince's officers.

"Your reputation, my lord," said he, "has preceded you, and His Highness is desirous of making the acquaintance of so distinguished a cavalier. He had hoped you would have visited him (as to say the truth it is usual to do,) but he desires to waive ceremony, and hopes to see you at dinner to-morrow, if not disagreeable to you. The Queen of Bohemia will honor the Prince with her company, and her Majesty having heard of you from Prince Rupert, is desirous of hearing from you of him in turn."

To this invitation I had, of course, but one answer to make; and I now gladly embraced his offer of escorting me to see the town. I found him a most agreeable companion; well informed, and sensible, though sarcastic, especially on the subject of his own democratic countrymen. He informed me that the States were about to recognize the Parliament as a Supreme Power in England, and had sent to treat with them accordingly. In return, the Roundheads had sent a deputation to the Hague, which was only just arrived, and which, he feared, boded little good to my King's interests.

"Nevertheless," he continued, "as the Prince is obliged to be well with all parties, one or two of these fellows will probably dine with him to-morrow. You will find yourself, however, the more at home, being face to face with your enemy, and surrounded by your friends."

Bentinck, for so was my new friend called, took leave of me at my own door, and I was immediately joined by Bryan, who led me aside with an anxious countenance, and told me he had some news to communicate.

"That evil destiny incarnate, Hezekiah," said he, "is here or not far off, I'm sure of it. I've

just seen that unnatural dwarf of his hunting about for us like a little spaniel; and he had fairly set Sir Janus in the long walk when I came up to his assistance. Now I've a plot against that little chap, and all I want to know is, what questions I'm to ask him if the devil that possesses him should allow him to tell truth for once."

I contented myself with expressing a desire to know what was Hezekiah's motive in coming to the Hague, and whether he had been aware of our being here. I strictly enjoined Bryan to do the poor dwarf no harm, and endeavored to persuade him that he might be a Christian like himself, and was certainly a fellow-creature, though in sad disguise.

Bryan smiled somewhat incredulously at this supposition, but he promised to treat him as kindly as if it were true, and departed. I continue the story of his adventures as I learned it from himself afterward.

By dint of very respectful language, he had prevailed on little Rabshekah to give him a meeting; and the poor creature was stalking to and fro very impatiently at the appointed place, when his new friend appeared.

"I have some secrets of importance to tell you," said Bryan, confidentially; "and it is better, therefore, that we should adjourn to a house where they sell wine, and where we may be private; for in truth it is a pleasure to meet an English gentleman in these foreign places."

"Be it so," said Rabshekah, condescendingly; "I love not the company of wine-bibbers or riotous eaters of flesh, in ordinary; nevertheless, as good company may perchance profit thy unhappy and malignant soul, I will even accompany you; yea, and look patiently upon the wine though it be red within the cup."

In a short time this singular pair were seated by a table, engaged in confidential conversation; Bryan's face, and merry but keen eyes, sobered down into not altogether mock interest in his companion's discourse. But ever and anon he passed the sparkling wine across to him, and pledged his health often, to stimulate his growing conviviality.

"Well," exclaimed the little man, throwing one little leg over the other, and contemplating his brimming glass complacently as he held it toward the light; "well, it is not often that men with state secrets in their heads have time to relax and recreate themselves after this fashion. Verily, this wine is good, and thy demeanor pleaseth me, young man."

"It is too much honor for me," Bryan replied, "to keep company with the confidant of—"

"Never mind, never mind," exclaimed the dwarf, looking nervously all round him; "it is better not to name any, for verily names do oft-times seem as if they conjured up those spoken of."

"Tis a pity," observed Bryan, "that a spirit such as yours was thrown away among those canting Roundheads: you would have made a right roaring Cavalier surely."

"I should not be the first of our family who did so," said Rabshekah, grandly. "My brother, Sir Geoffrey Hudson, has received the honor of knighthood for his loyal services."

"Then I have the honor of addressing Master Hudson, the elder, I presume?" asked Bryan.

"Yea, though men now call me Rabshekah,"

was the reply. "Little Goeff is but a younger brother, and a sad falling off in the family. I do not know how he came to be so diminutive; he's a good inch shorter than I am."

Gradually wine and vanity won their small empire over the dwarf, and he became communicative on every conceivable topic, except that to which Bryan desired to bring him. At any approach to the subject of Hezekiah, his little satellite looked round with an alarmed air, and deprecatingly changed the conversation: but Bryan was not so easily to be foiled.

"Whom are you looking for?" he demanded angrily; "do you expect to see a ghost, or is it that black-browed ranter who has put the coward into a heart like yours? Cheer up, my jovial comrade; I can answer for it, Hezekiah is safe enough in England; and it's too good a place for him, bad as he and his friends have made it."

When the dreaded name was fairly out-spoken, and the owner of it not conjured up thereby, the dwarf took courage and another beaker of the tempting wine.

"What knowest such as thou of the movements of our great preceptor?" he said scornfully. "Within the last four and twenty hours, I tell thee, he hath landed at that red-roofed Nineveh, which is called Rotterdam, by those who fear not to use that swearing name. He is even now busy expounding to the big burgomaster saints that dwell therein. I have already sought that man of two minds, Sir Janus, at Dort and Delft, when I found them not at Nineveh. Do you know," continued the dwarf, who was beginning to speak thickly, and to swing about upon his chair, "do you know, that if I did not deem too highly of the preceptor, I should almost guess he had an eye upon one of the Amalekitish women for a wife."

Bryan laughed scornfully, which seemed to rouse Rabshekah's spirit vehemently.

"Ha! mockest thou? Verily, thou hast but little cause for such crackling of thorns, and she whom he shall wed shall have far less. But he cometh, he cometh at the first hour of the night, and I must be at the appointed place, even by the Park bridge, to meet him. Keek, keek! I shou—ld like to see—e him if he fou—nd me not."

The poor little man laughed loudly at the idea of such a disappointment, and in his delight rolled off the chair, with a heavy bump upon the floor. He tried to rise, but the wine had done its fatal duty too effectually; he lay there, almost unconscious of anything.

It was now growing dark, and Bryan thought he could carry him out without observation in his cloak. Accordingly, having paid for the wine, and pointed out to the waiter the not unusual appearance of his comrade, he sallied forth with him, and deposited him softly on his own bed at our inn. There the poor dwarf slept soundly, and Bryan hastened to the bridge, to observe the effect of his absence upon the Puritan's movements.

CHAPTER XLIII.

O Lord! methought what pain it was to drown!
What dreadful noise of water in mine ears;
What sights of ugly deaths within mine eyes!

SHAKESPEARE.

"HOLLAND, surely, is the worst place in the

world for an adventure," said Bryan to himself as he strolled away to the dwarf's place of appointment. "The country is flat, the people are flat, the very beer is flat, and the only fish that is foolish enough to come to their shores are but flounders, and such like. Oh! but I'm tired of them for a leveling lot—always drinking, and never drunk—always money-making, and never rich—always questioning, and never quarreling. I'm tired of them and their country, and my blood's falling asleep in me for want of a rousing."

I may here observe, that in detailing his adventures to me, Bryan always accompanied them with such reflections as had occurred to him during their achievement; also, that in making speeches to himself and in repeating them to me, he made use of Hibernian forms of expression which he never allowed himself to use in English society.

The night was dark, and still, and frosty, as he now proceeded to keep his appointment for his new friend Rabshekah. There were a few stars, but they could scarcely pierce the sluggish mists that crept along lazily over the low ground. It was only when some object presented itself between the sky and him, that he could perceive its presence, and then it looked gigantic. The tall, dark gable ends of the houses, and the spectral shadows of some solitary cypress trees, alone met his eyes in the deserted streets.

As he passed on toward the Park, the chill and silence of the night began to affect his spirits strangely, and a vague, superstitious sort of fear to steal upon him. It was a guilty-looking place, he said, and he could just see the thick, icy waters glimmer without any light but their own scum of putrefaction. Those waters would scarcely let the cry of a man they were drowning be heard; his voice would have been choked in their clammy vapors.

"If it was only the fun of the thing that I was bent upon," thought Bryan to himself, "I'd just go back again, bad off as I am for diversion; but who knows what villany that Hezekiah may be breeding; and may be I'd come by the knowledge of it if I went on—so here goes. I wonder what all the frogs can be doing with themselves these long winters."

So he proceeded, endeavoring to divert his thoughts with all sorts of imaginations likely to repel the horror that was hovering over him.

At length he reached the appointed bridge. It was high and narrow, spanning a sluggish canal, together with the narrow tow-path by which the horses drew the treckshutes. Here Bryan placed himself for shelter against the low, but cutting wind that began to creep across the swampy park. While he leaned his head against the arch, he could hear, or rather *feel* the sound of approaching footsteps, as they echoed on the frost-bound road; yes, though as yet far off and cautious, he could perceive that they approached him. An indescribable nervous sensation stole over him; he instinctively felt for his pistols in his belt, and their familiar touch reassured him. He groped about him to ascertain his position, and he found there was a niche left in the archway, in order to allow the driver room, as his horses passed by, on the narrow path by the canal. In this niche Bryan ensconced himself, and soon afterward he heard that firm, heavy tread that could belong but to Hezekiah Doom.

But the divine was not alone; his companion stopped however at some distance from the bridge; and Bryan soon heard that heavy tread above him; then at one side, and then at the other side of the bridge, which he looked under; but he saw no shadow there, for Bryan had withdrawn himself closely into his sheltering niche. The divine then folded his arms patiently, and stood like a statue close by the canal. In a few minutes his companion joined him, and exclaimed, in sulky, half-smothered tones:

"Well, what says the imp of darkness! will Van Beest receive us, and has he found the old Judas?"

"The poor dwarf is not here," was the calm reply; "I fear me the rude boors have injured him."

"I tell thee what, John," returned the unknown, with angry impatience, "thou hast fooled me, not to say thyself, by trusting to this abortion of humanity. S'death! man, couldst thou not have trusted me with thine errand?"

"I could *not*," coolly replied Hezekiah; "nor any living creature but this unhappy dwarf, who was sent unto my necessities at the moment I most needed him, and has never failed me since."

"Wherein is the imp better than a man endowed with reasonable faculties?" demanded the stranger.

"Because he hath *not* reasonable faculties," answered the divine, "or so few that they are the more easily controlled. I require for the purposes unto which I am appointed, a blindly unreasoning will, and where else could I find one in England? Moreover it is a mercy to this creature to make him even an unconscious instrument of good. I once saved him from a cruel death, and he believes ever since that his fate is in my hands; that I have only to speak a word, and the human hounds will again be upon him to rend him limb from limb, or at least frighten him out of the little soul that their former cruelty has left. I make use of him day and night without pity; for if left to himself, he would soon fall a victim to his vanity and his vices."

"You have described a pleasant coadjutor," said his companion, in a still moodier voice. "I only hope the human hounds you speak of have caught and worried their game ere this; why wait we now?"

"Because he may yet be here, and it imports us much to know whether this Van Beest is to be relied upon. At his house we shall learn all that relates to the deputies, yet live apart without offense to them; if we enter the town unprepared, we shall have no excuse to dwell separately, and then they will rather be observers upon us, than we upon them. Secondly, I would know where this runagate dwelleth, for I would not seem ignorant, or have to ask my way."

"John, John," sternly said his companion, "thou shouldst either stick to thy pulpit where thy talent lies, or leave such twaddling altogether, and turn thy strength to stout worldly work as I do: thou must give up either one world or the other: no man has head or heart enough for both, and, as we're sure of the present one—"

"Would that I could; would that I could—give up the business of the present world, with all its snares," said Hezekiah sadly; "but a work is given unto me to do, and I may not go back from it until it be accomplished. I have

woven a web that no hand but mine own can unravel. Yet I know how hard it is for me to strive against the crooked counsels of our rulers. I know that thou, Giles Hacker, wast given unto me as an associate, because thy fierce, relentless nature would not scruple to execute their will, even unto the death, upon our brethren the deputies—ay, or upon myself, if what they call necessity required it."

"It was thine own will that sent thee on this errand," replied the other evasively. "It was well known that these deputies were not men to be trusted with the cause, and thou didst offer, of thine own will, to observe and report—yea, to be a spy upon them. Now, thou art an able penman, no doubt, but hast too much of that other world in thee. Though thou art a match, I will say that for thee, for any living man in argument or courage: but thou art no match for a hypocrite. This Rutherford can wind thee round his finger, once he gets you into the Book of Job. And then this daughter of Moab—she whom thou once didst boast to be a Miriam, a Jael, a Judith, a Deborah—she hath fled from England with a rantipoling Cavalier, and with large wealth; and still she doth draw thee like a thread. Yea—thou wouldest not have it said, even in thine own heart, but it was only when her father was known to have fled thither, that thou didst feel a call to attend as chaplain on these deputies."

Giles Hacker, as Hezekiah had called him, had uttered all this in the most bitter and scornful tone; it did not seem, however, to have produced any irritating effect upon the accused, though the accuser had lashed himself into indignation by his own harangue. Hezekiah remained silent, and Hacker resumed more angrily:

"Ay, curse thee and thy Jesuit plans! but for thy interference, I should have had this mission to myself, and made good profit of it, besides having the deputies under my thumb all their lives afterward. I, appointed to be thine associate! saidst thou? Nay, but thou wast made *mine*, when thou didst thrust thyself into this office for a woman's sake. Prove it! write to the Committee and accuse me of all this; and see whether men, who have struggled into power like them, can afford to dispense with the service of those who have helped them to do so, like me."

The spirit of Hezekiah at length seemed roused:

"Profane not," he exclaimed between his teeth, "profane not the sacred cause of a people's faith and freedom by associating it with such vile traders in blood and guilt as thou art. But thou hast well said. I will write to the Committee and denounce thee; not for thine offenses here this night, nor for thy vain boasts and vainer menaces; but for thy black treachery in Waller's plot, when thou wast ready to open the gates of London to the plundering malignants. Yes, I spared thee then, not because thou art of kin unto me; but because I thought, with all thy sins, thy desperate courage and subtilty might yet serve the good cause. I ask pardon of Heaven for supposing its work was to be done by such hands as thine. But ere another week is flown, thou shalt be glad to hide thy face in the uttermost parts of the earth from the wrath of the mighty that goeth forth against thee."

This denunciation made the arch of the bridge rescho again, before it spread out upon the dank night air, for the wind was now deadly still. The voice of Hezekiah had gathered strength as it proceeded, and Bryan held his breath to listen for the answer. It sounded—but was voiceless; a heavy stroke and a faint cry, and the crackling of the ice, with the splash of water, was all that Bryan heard; his feelings had been wrought up to intensity as the dialogue proceeded, and he would gladly have flung either or both of the disputants into the water with his own hands; but when one became the victim of the other, every feeling was merged in the mere impulse of humanity—and retribution too. He rushed from his hiding place, and—relieved against the pale starlit sky—he could see the dark shadow of a man bending over the water, with a heavy stone that he had wrenched from the coping of the bridge, ready to strike down his enemy if he rose; for all this was instantaneous; and so was Bryan's action, as with the stock of his pistol he struck the ruffian down; down upon the yielding ice, which opened to receive, and seemed to suck him in. A half-uttered oath escaped the villain as he fell, and was the last sign of life he ever gave.

Bryan, meanwhile, threw himself upon his knees, and broke with his pistol the intervening ice where Hezekiah had fallen in; then, holding by the bank, he let himself down cautiously into the canal, and soon got hold of the still struggling body of the divine. To drag him from the water, to lay him at full length upon the path and rub him vehemently, was the work of a minute, and it succeeded. The half-drowned man recovered by degrees, sufficiently to lean on Bryan's shoulder. At length he was able to proceed slowly toward the town.

"Mercy upon mercy, unworthy that I am!" were the first words he uttered. He was soon bestowed at a small inn near ours, a surgeon was sent for to attend him, and Bryan speeded home to render an account of his adventures, and to change his own drenched garments.

He found the poor dwarf still sleeping heavily, so he disturbed him not, but descended softly to my room. Having first swallowed an ample cup of mulled sack, he drew two or three long breaths and began his story; lending to it wonderful effect by his description and imitation of the contending voices.

My resolution was soon taken; I determined to visit Hezekiah, to confess myself informed of his schemes and determined to defeat them; but first of all I endeavored to see Zillah, and to make her acquainted with all that had passed, except the allusions that had been made to herself, which I could scarcely bear to think of, much less to repeat.

She heard the relation with deep interest, and made no opposition to my intended search for Hezekiah. Sir Janus was absorbed in a game of chess with Phoebe, and took no notice of my presence. I hastened away with Bryan to the inn, where he had deposited Hezekiah, but the divine was gone. He had left no clew to trace him by; but a slip of paper was put into Bryan's hands by the innkeeper, and on it was written:

"I request my deliverer to meet me at the same place to-morrow at nine o'clock."

We returned home discomfited, and Bryan consoled himself by wakening little Rabshekah,

and expressing his polite fears that he was late for his appointment. The bewildered dwarf slowly recovered his recollection, and the various expressions that chased each other over his miserable face would have been amusing, if they had not been almost deplorable. He sat up, and demanded what hour it was; and when informed, he sprang off the bed, flung himself upon the floor, and groveled there with all the symptoms of despair.

Bryan was absolutely touched by his grief, and even endeavored to comfort him; he tried to raise him up, and that failing, he sat down on the rush-strewn floor beside him; he offered him his can of wine; the dwarf shrank from it with horror. Finally, as much to make an honorable retreat as in any hope of soothing sorrow, he took up his harp, and began to play one of his sweet mournful native melodies. Rabshekah became silent; he gradually lifted his head and looked round in wonder; then slowly raised his body from the ground, and sat up in a grotesque attitude of intense attention.

Who is there that is proof to the delicate flattery of such unconscious admiration? Bryan was not, but continued to charm and soothe his poor little companion who had never been ravished by such sounds before. Music, for which it appeared that he had a fine sensibility, was the undiscovered passage to his soul. He became mild, cheerful, and at length so touched, that he burst into tears, and clasped his misshapen hands in a sort of tender transport.

"So you like that?" observed Bryan to him, as he laid down his harp.

"Oh yes, yes," exclaimed the dwarf passionately, "it's what I want—have wanted all my life. Oh, I would follow you to the end of the world, to be able to talk to my deaf soul so loudly and sweetly as you make that stringed voice talk."

"And so you shall, my poor lad," said Bryan. "You shall leave that gloomy tyrant of yours, and find a crust and a lesson from me, as long as I have a sword to win the one, or a finger to teach the other. So now to your grace, and say your prayers, and creep into bed; I believe, as my Lord says, that you've got a soul to be saved after all."

The dwarf instinctively obeyed his new master, though, as soon as the spell of the music had died away, he began to sob again as if his heart would break. More than once, during the night, Bryan heard him rise softly to approach the door, as if to escape, but, at the slightest sound, the poor creature crept back again, and resigned himself to all the torment of unrest. Bryan at length roused himself, and endeavored to persuade him that his preceptor was angered beyond all bounds, and that his anger would probably be fatal, if he once again laid hands on his lost slave. The dwarf apparently succumbed to this argument, and lay as still as death till morning.

CHAPTER XLIV.

Und hurte, hurte, vorwärts ging's
Felt ein und aus, Berg ab und an.
Stets ritten Reiter rechts und links
Zu beiden Seiten neben an.
Auf sprang ein weißer Hirsch von ferne
Mit sechzehn zachtigen Gehörne.

WHILE Bryan had been converting the dwarf from his sorrow, if not from his allegiance, I re-

ceived another visit from Bentinck. He came to tell me, that at supper, the Prince of Orange had expressed his intention of hunting on the morrow at "the Bosch," and had ordered him to offer me a horse, if I felt inclined to join the sport. Hunting had always been my passion, and I could not now deny myself an indulgence, to which I had been long a stranger. Besides, the information I had just received threatened no immediate consequences, and the Prince of Orange was to return to dinner at one o'clock. I therefore had gladly accepted the invitation, and in the early morning found myself once more well mounted, and in company with hounds. The huge brass horns and quaint costume of the huntsmen, the novel appearance of the huge round-about horses, their elaborate caparisons, and the sober carriage of the huge phlegmatic hounds amused me not a little.

We rode on through the forest at a leisurely trot; the huntsmen first, the hounds following; and then the sportsmen, perhaps twenty in number, and apparently in the order of their rank. I was marshalled to my place by a civil officer, who added that, as a stranger, I might not be aware, that even when the game was on foot, I was to preserve the place in the procession, now appointed to me.

After we had proceeded nearly two miles, the Prince of Orange, accompanied by Bentinck, overtook us at a gallop; when taking up the first place after the hounds, he adapted himself to the pace at which we had been moving. Bentinck looked round, and when he espied me, was surprised by the Prince to present me.

His Highness received me very graciously, and, of course, impressed me the more favorably. But his manner and appearance were such as to command deep interest, and inspire respect, universally. He was then in his sixty-third year, but upright and animated, as if he had been half a century younger. That animation was exhibited only in his eyes, however, and in his energetic carriage: his features were in general as impassive as marble: he looked like one who had lived surrounded by enemies all his life: his very smile was well regulated, though undisguised; and I do not believe that the sheathing of a dagger in his breast would have made him change countenance. He was a gallant warrior, a profound statesman, and an honest patriot; he had not passed through life under the great trials involved in these high names, altogether without scathe; (who *could* have done so in his place?) but his very faults had a certain stern nobleness. In a word, among the various parties that then divided Holland, he stood on a high station, apart; loved by many; respected or feared by all; and this entirely by the power of his own commanding mind and superior nature.

His questions upon the state of England were searching, but straightforward; they seemed to give with them, as much new light as they sought: at first they took in a wide circle of facts, then narrowing, explored my personal opinions, and, finally, my very hopes of our cause. It seemed to be just at the right time, when we reached the covert.

Here a noble stag of sixteen points had been marked down by the yeoman pricklers; and a brief arrangement for the assault was made, in order to compel our game to take toward the open country. It was a moment of considerable

excitement; even the Dutch sportsmen looked roused, and the Prince's eyes literally shone, as with a warrior's air and brief command he assigned us our stations. We were on the skirts of a small covert of shrubs and rushes, through which towered up a group of tall dark firs against a gloomy sky. The perfect stillness that prevailed was the more striking, from the suppressed excitement that only waited a sign to burst forth into tumultuous sound and motion. The very horses panted with expectation, and the well-trained hounds seemed almost in the act to spring, while crouching under the restraining whip.

At length our line was formed, extending in the shape of a crescent on either side, so as to leave but one direction open to the chase; then, at a signal, the advanced horsemen halted, and at the same moment a *chasseur*, on foot—armed with a bear-spear, and attended by two small beagles—bounded lightly forward into the covert. As the beagles dashed eagerly through the bushes, now here, now there, our suspense became more acute; the horses ceased to paw the ground, and gazed as eagerly as we did on the apparently empty space; while the grim hounds, though striving to be mute, gave forth an occasional note of fierce impatience. Still here, and there, bounded the little beagles; while the *chasseur*, with cautious steps and anxious eyes, endeavored to detect his gallant game.

Hark! a quick sharp cry, and the beagles dart forward simultaneously toward some invisible object; they bound over a fallen tree, and are lost to sight; but at the same moment up starts a magnificent stag, grandly developed in all his perfect symmetry against the lower sky: one moment he tosses his antlered head with proud indignation, as he spies his diminutive assailants; but the next, his large, dark eye beholds the hunters' formidable array, and he starts back; he recovers himself again—he gazes courageously all round him, and when he has resolved upon his course, he bounds away, lightly and airily, as if he could defy any earthly speed, except his own.

Then a dozen brass bugles sounded cheerily, and yet were drowned in the fierce voices of the hounds, as they dashed away after their flying victim. On, and away, through tangled covert and swampy meadow, and over wide stagnant ditches, did we sweep—but still in order—the Prince ahead, riding fearlessly; and soon we turned to the left, and emerged from field and forest on the *Dunes*, the long line of sand-hills that separates the Low Countries from the sea. Then, far away before us, we could see the noble form of the stag; but there were then few of us to see him—some half-dozen, perhaps, besides the master of the hunt. Some had pulled up at the wide ditches, some had fallen into them, and lay floundering still in the icy water; others were unable to get their horses on through the heavy sands, and gradually almost all had failed; still, on we went, who could.

A grove of willows now rose upon our view, and thither the stag struggled, evidently with failing heart and foot; he now moved close along the ground over which he first had seemed to soar; his bright red skin was blackened with sweat, and his wide-spread antlers rested almost on his neck; and now he has reached his shelter, and is lost to our view. But the hounds sweep on unweariedly; they never raise their heads, or trust themselves to look upon their game, but with

noses close to the ground, they scour along—not wildly fast, but inevitable; now they, too, disappear among the willows, and their cry grows louder and more angry. The stag is at bay within; we leap from our horses, and rush into the covert with our hunting-knives.

There we found our gallant quarry, with his back protected by two old trees; his branching antlers making wide sweeps all round him, and the fire of despair gleaming in his eyes, though tears were dropping from them, large and fast. The storm had now burst over his head, and the wind roared among the trees in wild harmony with the howling of the hounds. Close behind the grove, one of the great canals was emptying its surcharged waters into the sea, and joined its uproar to all the ominous tumult that gathered round our doomed victim, and then we burst upon his view; he saw his danger, and met it bravely: gathering up all his remaining strength, he made one vast leap, clearing the circling hounds, and sprang into the foaming waters just as they mingled with the sea.

"I would not have lost that creature for a thousand pieces," exclaimed the Prince, as he coolly replaced his knife to its sheath, and prepared to return home. But my island blood was up, and had been chafed by the restriction that had hitherto obliged me to remain behind.

"He's not lost yet!" I exclaimed, and I flung off my doublet, and plunged into the torrent with my knife between my teeth. I was soon borne into the tide-way where the stag was struggling against the rising waves; he struck out bravely, but the breakers embarrassed his breathing and kept him almost motionless as I approached him. To me, the sea was a familiar element, and I almost reproached myself with my advantage, until the stag turned to bay and endeavored to impale me on his brow-antlers; I met it with my left hand, and though I was driven backward by the force of his stroke, I emerged upon the next wave uninjured.

Not so my gallant enemy, however; I had used my knife with effect, and he now turned on his side, and bubbled out his last breath among the breakers. I then dragged him easily ashore, and when I had done so, and received compliments and congratulations on my feat, I was almost ashamed of it: I could have wished myself far away, and my victim once more roaming free among his native forests.

I have dwelt upon this hunting adventure longer than I should have done, but that I shrink from what succeeds.

We turned toward the Hague and rode slowly home: our wearied horses had never known such a day's work before, as Bentinck privately confessed to me, though he affected to treat the affair as a thing of course, for so the Prince was accustomed to treat everything. We soon met some of his attendants on comparatively fresh horses. The Prince mounted and rode rapidly away, leaving Bentinck and me to follow him as we might, more leisurely.

"In an hour hence," said my companion, as he heard the far-off town clock striking eleven, "that man will be seated in the town-hall, amongst our grave and bearded 'high-mightinesses'; giving audience to your rebel ambassadors without the slightest token, or the least thought of our morning's work.—But lo! who

comes here? he rides not like one of our staid people, yet he seems to seek me."

Plashing along through wet and mire as he galloped furiously, a horseman approached us. As he neared us, I saw that it was Bryan, and my heart sank within me. I hastened on my horse to meet him, and I heard him shout, as he came within hearing: "They are gone—they are gone!"

A few words explained all. He had gone at nine o'clock to the appointed place. He had waited impatiently, and began to fear that Hezekiah was too ill to come. "But then," he continued, "I knew he wasn't the sort of man to be ill, and I began to suspect something else. I hastened back to the inn, and just as I entered the town I was seized by a guard of soldiers; they dragged me away to a filthy guard-room, and all that I could make out was, that I was suspected of having drowned a man the night before in the canal. I then saw clearly I had been betrayed. I could have eaten my heart. I was near knocking my stupid head against the wall in revenge upon it; but first I thought I'd try the bars of my dungeon.

"These easy-going fellows," thought I, "are not accustomed to an Irish prisoner. The poor creatures they have in limbo wouldn't give themselves the trouble to escape, if they could! Well, the bars were a little tough, but they were very old, and with the leg of a stool, I contrived to force them wide enough to squeeze through. In a minute I was out on the top of a low roof; in another minute, I dropped down into a back lane, and ran for the life of me to the inn; I tore up stairs and into the little parlor—ah! there was only a shred or two of threads and things, and bits of packing on the floor, and the ladies' room was wide open! I raced up stairs to look for Rabshekah; the Leprechaun was sitting on the stove, smoking my pipe, and looking so contented, that I was near strangling him just to comfort myself. But he was very pale, and so glad to see me, I couldn't lay hands on him.

"He's been here—he's been here," he cried, "and I can tell thee all about it. Oh! but the preceptor's a wonderful man, and what a loss it is to be parted from him! Well, thou hadst scarce turned the corner when I felt the room creep, and I knew that the preceptor was within the walls, and I stole out, and hid myself in the closet behind the fagots; and I heard him say to Sir Janus that he was astonished at his running away like a guilty man, when the Parliament was ready to receive him with open arms, and to accept a loan upon his own terms, and to make a Lord of him, and to take off the sequestration; 'for,' said he, 'thou hast not a rood of land at this moment to call thine own. But the Parliament is merciful, and if thou returnest with me incontinently, they will make thee a great man. Lo! the horses are at the door; in two hours' time we shall be at Rotterdam, where a fast-sailing galliot waits to take me, on pressing business, down the river and across the channel. Choose! be an exile for life, or an English noble. Care not for thy wealth; the good goldsmith hath his heart in our business, and he waits below to receive thy orders, and to furnish thee with security that might satisfy an Emperor. Lo! here he is.'

"Then Sir Janus was bewildered; and, in

fine, he shouted to the ladies to get ready on the moment; and they strove and prayed for a little time, but it was all in vain; and in a quarter of an hour, they and their serving-woman were bundled off in a coach with six horses, that went as nothing in Holland ever went before or since except when I took a horse I found standing at a spirit-shop, and rode off to tell you this; and now, they'll be for hanging me for the horse-stealing, as soon as they've chopped my head off for the drowning business."

Astonished as I was at this new turn of affairs, I thought it better to tell the good-natured Bentinck everything. He immediately entered into my feelings; but confessed that there might be very great difficulties in obtaining mercy for Bryan, since there was no witness to refute the accusation and the testimony of the drowned corpse.

"The Puritan faction," he said, "is here so strong, that they will pursue this matter vindictively; and we cannot—nay, we dare not, oppose them. Here, good fellow, take my horse, and ride for your life to Rotterdam. At the turn of the tide there are always boats dropping down the river; let the horse loose in the Hoeg Straat, and get away with you on board the first craft you meet. At Brielle there are many English (it was once your own town), and you will be safe. There you can wait for our friend, who, I presume, will not be long after you. And here, lad, take this trifle from a brother soldier; you'll want it amongst our sailors, and you'll yet repay me with interest, I doubt not."

Bryan was on the generous Dutchman's horse in a moment, but he put aside the proffered purse.

"Ten thousand thanks to you; and I'd take it as freely as your kind heart offers it, if I wanted it; but I need it not. The devil himself's not all black, and this kidnapping villain left with the inn-keeper a bag of gold, by way of reward, I suppose, to pay for my wake after I was hanged for him. I intended to have given it back; but now—oh! let me first catch him!"

And he was off. I watched him anxiously, as, at a turn of the road that lay nearest to the town, he pulled up his horse. I feared he had been beset, but was relieved when I saw the dwarf rush out of a thicket to him. In a minute, Bryan had swung him up before him on his saddle, and he was soon out of sight.

Bentinck and I pressed on to my inn; we passed the prison where sentries were marching backward and forward, keeping strict watch on their imaginary prisoner; we reached our destination, flew up stairs past the sleepy-looking servant, and into the room that I had left so happily tenanted the night before. How strangely altered it looked now! and that door, that seemed to me to enclose, as in a sacred shrine, the form of one who gave light and blessing to all round her—that door was flung widely apart, and Zillah's chamber was open to the profane world! I looked round in silent and almost stupefied grief.

Bentinck at length said to me:

"Of course you want to follow them; you may find them at Brielle, where our pilots always make delay. In ten minutes you shall have a horse that will satisfy you; give him, and use my name, to one Jan Gueldeers, at the corner house of the Hoeg Straat; he will do all you bid him! Farewell! I hope in happier times that we may meet."

I felt deeply touched by this stranger's chivalrous kindness, but I could only offer him hurried thanks as I accepted it. By the time his horse arrived, I had settled my few affairs, and sent Bryan's harp to Bentinck to take care of for me; I soon found the flat fields and waters receding past me, and then the tall spires of Delft; and soon after one o'clock, I was cantering over the rough pavement into Rotterdam.

CHAPTER XLV.

The catfif mob,
All threatening death; all in strange manner moved;
Sterne was their look; like wild amazed steers,
Staring with angry eyes, and stiff, upstanding ears.
SPENSER.

As I approached the town, I had heard the roar of an angry mob; a fearful sound, not to be mistaken or forgotten by those who have once heard the dissonant and jarring uproar of the human storm. I became still more anxious for Bryan, and for one who was yet dearer to me: I knew by reputation, the fierce and ungovernable character of the Dutch people, when once roused; I hastened forward and found the streets deserted, the windows barred and the uproar becoming louder at every moment; then, suddenly, it died away. With some difficulty I discovered the appointed house and procured a reception for my horse, but Jan Gueldeers was out, and his household sorely affrighted at his absence.

I could not restrain my impatience, and was about to sally forth in the direction of the late turn-out, when Jan entered hastily; he was deadly pale; he passed me without notice, and flinging himself into a chair by the kitchen fire, he looked round as if he wanted something. His wife quickly and without even speaking, poured out a large glassful of some clear liquor from a certain jar, and then stood with folded arms, waiting to hear his news. I was less patient. I announced myself in English as Bentinck's friend, and as one extremely pressed by anxiety and haste. The Dutchman only waved his hand, and applied himself once more to the glass, which now began to restore color to his white cheeks.

At length he spoke, prefacing his speech by a number of exclamations and sounding oaths; when at length his story came, it was addressed partly in Dutch to his frau, and partly in English to me, so I shall only detail the substance of his communication.

About half an hour before, he had been standing at his window, when he saw Bryan, with the dwarf, ride by at speed on a white horse, which he recognized as Bentinck's property. He snatched up his hat hastily and followed. He saw him dismount near the quays and turn the animal loose, so he was persuaded he was fleeing from justice: therefore as a good citizen, he was about to raise a cry of thief upon him, when his attention was arrested by a mob upon the quays, that had gathered round a galliot. On board of her were an old man and two young ladies, dressed in black, just embarked. The latter were both weeping, and a report ran through the crowd that a priest was conveying them off to be made nuns. The supposed priest was a man of an awful and commanding presence, who stood upon the gangway—unarmed, but by force of eloquence

straining the angry, excited people. He spoke in the language of the country fluently, and already gathered round him some defenders; but still the ladies wept; and the boatmen did not dare be cast loose from the quay, for some of the people were armed and threatened to fire on them if they stirred. And all this time the uproar increased, for those who were further from the vessel shouted furiously against the preacher, and at length the terrible cry "sorcerer," began to be heard, and that word made the people still more wild, for witchcraft is held in great horror here. But some friends of the accused now came to his assistance, and declared that he was a godly man from England; and to prove it, they invited him to come ashore which he did, right boldly, into the middle of the mob.

Just then appeared at the dyke, the young man, Bryan, with a most misshapen dwarf, who stood alone, while his companion ran to the water's edge to hire a boat. When the preacher saw this dwarf, he seemed to forget all else, and indeed the mob had subsided from anger into ashamed silence.

"Ha! thou unhappy one," he cried in a voice of thunder, to the trembling dwarf, "come hither instantly, before it be too late."

At the same moment, the young man looked up from his boat and beckoned kindly, but as hastily, to the poor little creature to follow him. The dwarf paused, as it seemed, in painful doubt: then yielding to the stronger impulse, he put his hands before his face and rushed blindly toward the preacher.

"A sorcerer—a sorcerer!" now burst in fearful yells from the mob, "see, his familiar comes!"

The preacher saw the dwarf's danger, and strode forward to save him, but it was too late; the mob had turned upon the hapless creature, who recoiled in terror and fled wildly along the streets, pursued by the ravening people. Then rose the terrible street-cry, "tear him to pieces, tear him, tear him!" and the sound was echoed from a thousand mouths. The poor dwarf sped on, holding up his hands imploringly where there was none to save, and uttering fearful screams, but they were suddenly hushed; the mob, headed by a few half-starved, half-drunken, howling beldames, had overtaken their prey, and all was over, except the bustling, deadened sounds of people struggling and straining amongst themselves. The preacher, meanwhile, finding it impossible to penetrate the crowd, after desperate efforts to do so, had paused when the cries of pursuit had ceased. In a moment, perceiving that he was too late, he returned with hasty strides toward the vessel, and with his own hand casting off the hawser, he sprang on board. When the people looked back for him he was gone; the rapid tide and a fair wind were speeding him away.

Meanwhile the mob continued dense in one spot, where a score of people were struggling together, as if engaged in some work on which their lives depended; but a young man came bounding forward—in and through them,—and at length over their shoulders, until he reached the assassins; then diving among them, he flung aside the fiercest of them from their bloody work with resistless energy. A mob is wondrously fickle and easily affected; instead of rushing in upon their new victim as the spectators expected,

they recoiled from around him and shrank back from his passionate and despairing denunciations of their barbarity. He raised the mangled remains of the poor dwarf in his arms; they were scarcely recognizable. The cheeks were rent in two, and one was torn off the bone;—the scalp was bare—but why should I go on? Scarcely human had the poor creature been before—but now, he looked like some mangled carcas from a butcher's stall that had been dragged by wild dogs through the mire!

"Fiends!—accursed fiends!" exclaimed Bryan, pressing the torn human fragments to his heart; "see what ye have done! and whilst ye have wreaked all the malice of hell upon this innocent child, ye have let yon villain escape."

The people turned round, and then it was that they saw the galliot loose, and sailing rapidly away. Their mood was changed, they shrunk asunder as rapidly as they had gathered, and Bryan was left to carry off his miserable prize without resistance. He placed the corpse on board his boat, greatly against the sailors' wishes, and shoved off into the stream. There, he made fast to the cable of a ship;—"and he now lies," concluded the Dutchman, "as if waiting for some one. He *may* have stolen that horse; he *may* be a runaway malefactor—but by all that's good, I'd rather cut off my right hand than put it out to stop him—for he's a brave youth—a brave youth," and the burgomaster drew his hand hastily across his eyes.

A few words served to explain my business, which was the less, as I now knew that Bryan was waiting for me. Jan, however, accompanied me to the water's edge, and there I had to wait but a minute for Bryan's boat; the next, we were away, and speeding down the river.

I did not see the poor dwarf's remains; Bryan had shrouded them in a spare sail, with a heavy piece of ballast. He proposed to sink them in the first calm, deep spot we came to; we accordingly hove to, at a convenient place, and committed the poor relics to the deep.

As the muddy waters closed over them and bubbled up, Bryan appeared quite affected, and remained some time after in silence, which I did not care to interrupt. At last, with a deep sigh, he seemed to cast the sorrow from his mind, as he had cast the cause of it from the boat's side; and turning round, he saluted me as if we had only just met.

I told him I had heard the story of his late adventures. "A sad business!" he said thoughtfully, "but now the horror of his ending is over, it's well for him. Poor creature! what was life to him but a scorn and a pain."

We were now moving swiftly over the muddy Maas, between willow-tufted banks of slime; the very sky was mud-color, even the boatmen looked dingy; and there was as little of external hope or promise in our circumstances as could be well imagined. I determined, immediately on reaching Brielle, or overtaking the galliot, to obtain an interview with Zillah, whether by force or otherwise; and then to proceed to Weymouth, in order to rejoin the King's forces as soon as possible at Oxford.

We had one small sail set—our only one,—for the other had gone down with Rabshekah and we pulled by turns at the oar; but still our light craft could not overtake the galliot. Owing to the low grounds, and the winding of the river,

we could sometimes see, her topsails across a tongue of muddy land, apparently quite close; but as soon as the river opened, she was several miles away, and so she was when night fell over us.

It was near seven o'clock when we made the lights of Brielle, and ran into its crowded harbor. There we searched eagerly for the galliot, but she was gone. We made out her pilot, whom she had layed-to merely to put ashore; and he informed us that the dark man, who seemed to govern all things, compelled the crew to put out straight to sea.

I now found myself separated from Zillah by a distance that appeared to have no limit but that of the war. I still longed, however, to find myself on the same land that she trod with that stately step of hers. I had some consolation, strange to say, in the knowledge of her sorrow; and imagined that the outrage committed by Hezekiah upon her freedom and her will must estrange forever her proud heart from him, and all that related to him. I knew, too, that in London, as it then appeared, she would find democracy triumphant in manners as well as in politics; and I hoped, from what I had heard of the populace, that her views would be changed still more in regard to their fitness for supreme legislation.*

I pitied poor Phœbe, however, with unmitigated pity, and I feared for her too, under such a guardianship as that she was about to experience.

We found it was too late to seek a vessel that night. Every Dutchman at the Brielle was then asleep or drunk, so we betook ourselves to our rest, and slept as best we might. The next morning we were astir at daybreak, and soon found a handy fishing-smack, that was ready to put to sea as soon as she could shake her sails out.

I omit the details of our voyage and our adventures, afterward, on our road to Oxford. There, we found great changes impending, but no more prospect of a termination to the war than the former year had opened with. The Scots were about to enter England on the North, in order to combine with the Parliamentary forces under Fairfax; but then a stout reinforcement of troops, recalled from Ireland, nearly counterbalanced the new danger. A parliament of sixty peers and three hundred commons had assembled in Christchurch, and voted one hundred thousand pounds, which was nearly raised. They had also received the Dutch Ambassadors with great form; but soon after our arrival, the latter had retired with precipitation, for which I was able, in some manner, to account to Sir Edward Hyde. The Queen was preparing to retire to Exeter, through fear of Essex; Prince Rupert was away at Shrewsbury; York and Lathom House were besieged and praying daily for his assistance.

Such was the state of affairs when we found ourselves welcomed heartily at the head-quarters of the King. I could no longer afford to refuse a command, which I instantly obtained, and set out with some reinforcements for the Prince. Bryan accompanied me, having been made, at my request, the captain of my troop.

I will not detail the campaign that followed;

* We may judge of the Cavalier's impression of London at this time, from the description given by Evelyn in his *Memoirs*. London, 1826, p. 149.

we relieved Newark and Lathom House and took Bolton by storm. Soon afterward, Prince Rupert received imperative orders to relieve York and attack the Scotch at all risks. On the 30th June, we lay at Knarborough, where we were joined by Goring and a strong division of horse. On the first of July, we relieved York, and on the second, fought the fierce and fatal battle of Marston Moor.

Thenceforth, all was a series of misfortunes, errors and defeats. Once more we found ourselves at Newbury (in October), and there left behind us, in the ground, the best part of the bravest blood still remaining in our army. In November, we once again entered Oxford for winter quarters, and found time to rest. So ended the year 1644.

CHAPTER XLVI.

Our gayness and our gilt are all besmirched
With rainy marching in the painful field;
There's not a piece of feather in our host,
And time hath sworn us into slovenry.

SHAKESPEARE.

The time that I have passed over so lightly I need not say, was full of incident and adventure; but in autobiography the interests of nations shrink into insignificance when compared with the struggles and experiences of our own hearts. During all this time, I fought as best I could. I suffered some privation, much sorrow, and not a few wounds; but when it was all over, and the cause that I served proved to be exactly where it was before, everything was forgotten like a dream.

I had not seen or heard from Zillah all that time. Monotony can steal over and blight with weariness our most energetic physical efforts, unless the mind enters into them, and varies them with its own infinite vicissitudes. The sudden summons "to boot and saddle;" the shrilly trumpet's midnight call to danger or to death; the mustering squadron's eager tramp; all these once set my pulses bounding, and embarrassed my movements by the haste in which I buckled on my sword, and sprang into my saddle. Now, a sound, uninterrupted sleep was become a luxury; a trumpet, a troublesome noise; a battlefield, a pest; a charge itself but an unpleasant excitement. Nothing ever came of aught we did: we had seen our best and bravest friends swept from beside us; our trustiest soldiery struck down, or cloven by shot or steel; our very spirit wasted, and—all in vain! There seemed to be some spell upon us that we could not shake off—some approaching doom that we might not shun.

And then, when the strife with the enemy was ended, and retired again within the walls of Oxford, we sought repose and recreation; then, we found so many mean bickerings, jealousies, and intrigues, that most of us wished for another campaign, if 'twere only to change the strife of tongues for that less cruel weapon—the sword.

Honors were distributed, however, even among some of those who deserved them. Bryan had received his long sought-for and well-earned knighthood, and now rode in Prince Rupert's regiment as Sir Bryan O'Connor. Prince Rupert had been made Generalissimo, and even I

had been offered an honor which I had declined.

I must not here omit a characteristic conversation that passed between the King and Sir Bryan previous to the knighthood. His Majesty seemed desirous to impress on the Irishman's mind, that it was as a favor to Prince Rupert that he knighted him—an Irish adventurer. Bryan was equally anxious to maintain that the honor was his due. As he had the weakness (if such it be) to claim royal descent, he had, at least, the good sense to maintain his claim with unswerving pertinacity :

"May it please your Majesty," said he, "had I but means of access to the palace which we have all done our best endeavors to restore to our King—I could prove that I have a right to claim knighthood from your royal hand, had I never struck a harder stroke for it than that which I trust your Majesty is about to lay upon my shoulder. I have read in learned books, that when Richard II. of England would have knighted my ancestor, the O'Connor of Connaught, my ancestor declined; having been received already into the order of the Red Branch, which dates from before the first year of Grace."*

"Indeed," replied the King, kindly; "I believe, not only from your words, but from your deeds, that you are a gentleman."

"I trust I am, Sire," Bryan rejoined proudly; "and in that title is comprised every title of nobility, as her Majesty's illustrious father has well taught."†

Without further parley, the King silenced his brave follower, by administering the required accolade, and Bryan rose up as gentle, and true, and brave a knight as ever bore a banner. . .

For my own part, I served on through the campaign without a thought, but that of doing my duty to the uttermost, and setting myself against the increasing vices of the camp, by all the example that I could show. My only hope was to wear out the apparent malice of fortune with honor; and to make sure that, in bowing lowly and reverently to Providence, I was not unconsciously stooping to a servile sense of fatality.

Nor was my experience altogether unenlightened by some pleasanter vicissitudes. When we relieved Newark, for instance, I had the gratification of finding my good steed, Satan, in high beauty and condition; and on our advance to York, I once more rode side by side with Harry Hotspur. He only alluded to his accession of the Beaumanoir estates once, and then with an amiably awkward manner.

"It would seem ridiculous," said he, "to crush a rascally legal quibble, as we now stand, when the Parliament has seized upon your right and my wrong together. But as soon as ever our King has his own again, and my signature is able to refute a lie, this rascal deed shall burn or drown."

I thanked my cousin for his generous intention, but told him that as he had brothers and might

* Our young Cavalier had probably been studying Froissart, who bears him out in this assertion. He adds, that the hospital attached to this order of knighthood was called "The House of the Sorrowful Soldier." It is difficult to believe that the fine fictions of Ireland's early glories were all lies.

† Henry IV., of France and Navarre, used to say: "La qualité de gentilhomme est le plus beau titre que nous possédons."

have children he had no right to exercise his generosity. He shook his head impatiently, and changed the subject of discourse. . . .

The Treaty of Uxbridge was now attempted, and gave our garrison at Oxford both amusement and comparative freedom. I had little expectation of its success from the first, and therefore the more eagerly availed myself of its brief interval to procure a pass to London. My supposed complicity in Waller's plot was now forgotten; and as Essex alone was to be consulted in the matter, I obtained his order without difficulty for myself and Bryan.

It was on a fine afternoon in spring, toward the end of the year 1644,* that we found ourselves entering London by the Reading road.† We stopped at the first house of entertainment, in order to learn the news and to procure some refreshment. It was the Piccadilly which I had visited, when a boy, under far different circumstances. It was then frequented by the gayest, as well as the most influential men about the court; and there I had seen Hyde in familiar conversation with Essex, while Digby was apparently amusing himself at bowls with Lord Holland. It was now very differently occupied: the bowling-green was neglected and the bowls half-buried in the long grass; the benches were filled with dark, somber-looking men, smoking solemnly and drinking seriously; while from time to time one of them would make some formal remark, and elicit a few *hems* or *hums* by way of comment or approval.

Bryan and I had assumed the gravest dresses we could procure, but we instantly drew all eyes upon us. All the other guests had their hair clipped, according to the most orthodox "Committee cut," as it was called; ours still floated down our shoulders, and the very plumes in our hats seemed to wave more jauntily, as if in defiance; at least I am sure Bryan's did.

Finding that my host could or would furnish me with but little news, I prepared to depart, and was leaving the room, when my attention was drawn to my reckless comrade, who was in high conversation with a pretty bar-maid.

"Good wine, by my faith!" said he to her; "none of your lively company can dissent to that matter, anyhow."

"Who art thou that speakest of dissent?" growled out a person who seemed to be an officer. "Dissent is not a word to apply to profane things. I am a dissenter."

"What's that to me?" retorted Bryan, turning on his heel; "I don't care one maravedi if you were an Anabaptist."

"And so I am," rejoined the irritated Puritan; "and it is well for thee if fettered limbs do not repay thee for the freedom of thy tongue."

Bryan seemed delighted with the angry turn that the conversation was assuming, and significantly invited his new acquaintance to finish it outside the house. The man obeyed the suggestion with alacrity, but as soon as we were in the open road his countenance relaxed from its grave expression to one more frank and kindly.

"Why, thou hare-brained youth," he exclaimed, "what madness possesses thee to come swaggering into an enemy's camp with the dress of Esau, but the voice and swagger of Jacob—of a malig-

* The year at this time ended on the 25th of March.

† Now Piccadilly.

nant, I mean? Were it not for the sake of old times, when I too served the King, I would fain have left thee to make me sport, like Sampson, among all those Philistines—I mean among those godly men. Tush, man, hear me! I do wish thee well; I see thou art a Cavalier, and I also see that thou wilt get thyself into limbo ere sundown, unless I take care for thee, which, for the sake of old times, I will do. If thou and this honorable gentleman thy companion will take my advice, ye will put up at the Star tavern, where there is a worthy host; one who, like myself, once served the King. He will not see you wronged, and I don't care if I come to take a cup with ye after nightfall myself."

I saw the value of this good fellow's advice, and there were some phrases in his speech that reminded me of poor Hugo's adventure during his imprisonment. I accepted, therefore, his offers of civility, and demanded whether his kindness to a Cavalier had not already cost him dear, when he was Sub-Lieutenant of the Tower?

He looked at me with surprise, and confessed it had. I then gave my horse to Bryan, requesting him to lead it for me; and as I walked with Archer down the road, I recalled to his mind all the circumstances so deeply impressed on my own memory. He first looked cautiously round, and then gave me his hand, and grasped mine cordially:

"Ah! he was a noble youth, your brother," he exclaimed, with much feeling; "a noble youth; and when I read an account of his brave defense in the North, and how he died at his own threshold, it put me in mind of old times, and brought a tear into my foolish eyes. I loved him, sir; no one could help loving him, that watched him as I did, and saw every feeling that was high and good playing in his bright blue eyes, and round his bonny mouth. And he was so fearful of saying an unpleasant word, and so fearless of danger and of death! Well, there's my hand upon it, I will befriend his brother to the risk of my own neck. I haven't the same means now that I had in old times; but as you're new to this wicked city, I may be of some use to you."

I eagerly inquired if he knew anything of his former prisoner, Sir Janus.

"Ah, well away, that I do, poor man! he ran away into foreign parts near a twelvemonth ago; but he was decoyed back by the Committee, and had great promises made to him. And when I saw in the *Mercurius* that he had come to London, I made out his lodgings, for the sake of the bonny ladies, his daughters. I found him, poor man, little fit for all the honors that were promised him. Between the fever of his mind, and the chill of his body in coming from Holland, he had an attack of paralytic, and lay with just enough of life in him to keep his body from decay; and so he lies to this hour, I believe. I offered my poor service to the ladies, his daughters; but as I was speaking to them, in walked that terrible dark man, Hezekiah, and with a scowl that went near to frighten me, he accused me of all sorts of crimes, and declared that if he ever saw me again in Westminster, he would have me sent to the American settlements as a spy of the malignants. So I came away fast, and I seldom hear of them now, but when I meet old Sturdy, Sir Janus's servant, at the Star, where

he sometimes drops in, to take a horn of ale, and ease his mind by a little safe talking."

By this time we had arrived at the tavern in question. Mine host was a grave, anxious-looking personage of immense bulk, who waddled to the door to receive us, casting an inquiring look upon our guide before he did so. I know not what secret sign he received, but he straightway ushered us into a large upper chamber, where the royal arms were carved above the ample fireplace. Here he told us we might feel ourselves secure from both King and Parliament, if either of them could have ill-will against two such goodly gentlefolks. In a few minutes our horse-bags were brought up stairs, and at my desire I was left to myself to ponder upon my future movements.

I had had good reason to moralize on the uncertainty of all earthly matters during my ride from Oxford. Just before my departure, I had received a formal legal notice from a lawyer, in Hotspur's employment, to resign and abandon "all that and those, &c., the estates of Beaumanoir, and to refund all rents that had been received therefrom, during the last forty years." I could scarcely believe that this proceeding had been sanctioned by my cousin; yet, there, too truly, was his signature, unmistakable in its wide bold writing.

I could not deny the justice of such an application, but it appeared to me to savor of wanton cruelty to make such a demand upon me at such a time. It fell heavily upon my heart, for I reflected that, whatever future fortune the most sanguine hope could look forward to achieving, the discharge of such a debt must ever remain hopeless. I had received another packet, however, from the hands of the lawyer, which I was requested not to open until I reached London, and there to act upon its contents, as I should find to be most advisable. This I now proceeded leisurely to examine; for I knew that it would be necessary to proceed with great caution in visiting Sir Janus, and that I must defer any attempt to do so for the present.

I had a sort of instinctive horror, which I believe is pretty generally shared, of legal documents; the first object that met my eyes was a most formidable looking deed, written at great length on parchment. As well as I could make out, through tortuous sentences and Latin gibberish, it purported to be a resignation on my part of all right and title to Beaumanoir forever more. Inclosed was also a copy of the disinheritance deed, which left me for life not only penniless, but oppressed by a hopeless weight of crushing debt.

For a moment my heart sunk within me; it was true I was alone—utterly alone, in the world. Of ever being otherwise, I had only a dim and perhaps visionary hope; knowing, as I well did, Zillah's firm character. Yet still, to sever with my own hand the thousand ties that bound me to the loved and honored home of my fathers was trying—was almost impossible. A letter fell from the parcel—it was in Hotspur's writing, and as I read it my feelings changed. It ran thus:—

FOR THE LORD HASTINGS.

"My Cousin,
"I am informed by that devil's brood, the

lawyers, that I cannot give you up your own estates, for they are what is called entailed (and be d——d to 'em) on a certain unknown and invisible young gentleman (or gentlemen) my son or sons. This much, however, I can do (though, unfortunately, I must leave it to the aforesaid devil's brood, to arrange for me): in order to avoid all litigation, and to save the young gentlemen, aforesaid, from the curse of law-business, I can release you from all past responsibility, and what they are pleased to call debt,—if you sign some infernal paper, called a release, which they will furnish you with. But as the rents, which I thus generously forego, never could have been paid by you, and were all flam, I give you the inclosed order for a thousand pounds on my friend, Mr. Crisp, of London, for the free surrender of all your property. If you don't consent to sign, burn my order, and pitch the release to the devil. I confess, however, it would be a great relief to my mind to think the business was settled, and at (to me) so cheap a rate. I picked up the said moneys, and some more, from a treasure-wagon of the Roundheads; and if I can't thus turn it to good account, I shall have spent it, I have no doubt, before this day month, in Canary and gunpowder.

"Your most affectionate

"Cousin and spoliator,

"H. HASTINGS."

This characteristic letter gave a new turn to my thoughts. I was still landless and homeless, but I was free and independent. My heart leaped up joyously; none but those who have been long borne down by the weight of a crushing debt can tell the gratitude I felt; the elasticity and hopefulness with which I sprang from my chair and strode up and down the room in proud consciousness of being now able to look the world in the face, and to defy it.

I read Hotspur's order on Master Crisp, and I found that, besides its pecuniary import, it contained the strongest recommendation of me to his good services. I had no time to lose; at any day or hour the Uxbridge Treaty might be broken off, all passes suspended, and I once more a prisoner to the Roundheads. I had often heard of this Mr. (now Sir Nicholas) Crisp, as one of the worthiest and wealthiest of our city merchants; one who possessed such influence in his ward that, though a known royalist, no insult or attempt at oppression had ever been attempted toward him. To him, accordingly, I determined to repair as soon as possible, in order to obtain his advice and information concerning Sir Janus and my future movements.

I called out to inquire whether Bryan was gone out, as it was already getting dusk: my call was answered by the stiffest and most prim-looking Puritan I had yet seen. As he stood between me and the fading light, he might have passed for an impersonation of the Gentleman in Black; tall, angular, gloomy; without curls, but with a huge rapier that appeared like a tail between his legs.

"What wouldst thou, son of confusion?" he demanded with a severely nasal twang.

"My friend, who came with me just now," I replied.

"Lo! he is even here," returned the nasal voice, "though, verily, he is somewhat changed."

And Bryan's own merry laugh sounded in my

ears. He proceeded to tell me, that having just taken a turn in the street, he had been insulted, and plashed with mud, and called all sorts of unseemly names; whereupon he had held counsel with my host, and assumed a dress in which he said he could belabor any man that he was able to master with impunity from public opinion. He prayed me to let him tuck my hair under my hat, and to arrange my neck-cloth more in the fashion of a band. He then sedulously pulled my doublet out of shape, and set my boots in a different fashion. When he considered my arrangement completed, he requested that for the future I would only behold in him Aminadab Sparerib, and showed me a letter which he had not only written, but addressed to himself under that title, in case of any difficulty. We then set forth in search of Master Crisp in Threadneedle Street.

It was the first time that Bryan had ever been in London; and I was astonished at all that he saw, and found interest in: to me, however, much also appeared new, when placed in the light in which he viewed it. He carried out his disguise to perfection as long as he was in the mood to practice it, but often his propensity to amuse himself led him into situations very much at variance with his puritanical appearance. When we arrived at Temple Bar, for instance, we found a fanatical preacher standing on a high tub (reversed); a considerable audience was gathered round him, and one of his admirers held up a torch to assist the moonlight in displaying the contortion of the preacher's face. He was denouncing the King, under the name of Agag, and ridiculing the treaty as an attempt to arrest the judgment of Providence on his devoted head.

"What?" he screamed out, "will ye listen to those who sit in council while they seek to save him who is cast aside utterly and condemned? Will ye listen to the pale-livered who preach and pray that the heart of Agag may be touched; touch his heart—forsooth! hath he not a fifth rib to be struck? What means the prophet when he commands to bind our kings with chains, and our nobles with links of iron?"

And in this wild manner he was proceeding when Bryan, after struggling through the crowd, at length got one foot on the edge of the tub, and leaned upon it as if excited by the sermon; as, indeed, he was. Just as the preacher had collected all his breath for a furious explosion against the Gentiles, Bryan's foot pressed too heavily on the edge of the tub, and sent its occupant spinning over the heads of his hearers. When the angry people looked round, however, the last person whom they could suspect was the meek Aminadab; he looked up, with dignified mien but anxious eyes and folded hands, at the discomfiture of the ranter.

After this little adventure, we proceeded without further interruption, and by aid of a link-boy, at last reached the dwelling of Master Crisp.

We were directed to a narrow entrance opening into a court-yard, where we found a porter. By him we were ushered into a small, plain, oak-paneled apartment, in which a fine fire blazed and roared cheerily.

I had sealed Hotspur's letter, in order to leave it, if necessary; and I now sent it by the porter in order to avoid giving my name. Bryan and I were left alone to amuse ourselves as best

we might; but the place in which we found ourselves seemed to bid defiance to any pleasant distraction of our thoughts.

The evening was dark, and the court-yard was darker still. The room in which we stood was so free from ornament, or variety of any sort, that it resembled rather a huge box than an oak-paneled apartment. The silence all round us, too, was profound, or only broken by the crackling of the fire. One melancholy candle threw a sickly smile of light around it, which made the rest of the room look still more dismal.

Suddenly we heard a sweet, wild, thrilling song, as if it burst up from the very heart of the singer. It pealed along some distant passage, and approached us rapidly; the door opened, and the light figure of an exquisitely graceful and beautiful girl bounded into the room. Still singing, she was passing on to another door, when her bright eyes caught ours, and she started, gazed for a moment on us with surprise, and then vanished as she came.

Bryan and I looked at each other in at least equal surprise; but before we had time to make any observation, our host entered.

He was a noble-looking fellow, tall in person, frank and open in countenance, with eyes like those of an eagle, and a genial, fearless manner, that inspired me at once with esteem and confidence. He bade me heartily welcome, spoke very complimentarily of the knowledge he already possessed of me through public report, and then desired to know if there was any manner in which he could serve me. When I named Bryan to him, he greeted him with almost equal cordiality, and showed a perfect acquaintance with his character and achievements. Indeed he seemed to be aware, as I afterward discovered, of almost everything that had passed in the King's camp. When I remarked this to him, he confessed that he employed an intelligent man at Oxford, whose sole business it was to write to him constantly, and supply him with intelligence on the most minute, as well as the most important subjects.

"It is my business," he continued; "and if I have succeeded better than most people in my affairs, it is principally because I have *known* more than most people, and been able thereby to take a greater number of chances into calculation."

My host seemed, indeed, to be one of those who are made to prosper in the world; with a vehement, ever-active will, that gave an all-prevailing momentum to high talents, and a fine tact that steered his powerful impulses like a delicate rudder. In Venice, he would have been a merchant-prince ruling the State. In the city of London, he was a princely merchant, imparting not only prosperity and intelligence, but a high generous tone of character to his numerous assistants and dependents.

This accomplished person now returned me the letter I had sent to him, and asked if I desired to have the money at once. I replied that I had not yet earned it, but would bring him a deed on the following day to witness, and to keep for my cousin. He then pleaded pressing business, and said he should feel highly honored if, with my friend, I would dine with him on the following day. I accepted the invitation with pleasure, and apologized for detaining him while I asked if he knew where Sir Janus Demirov

was living, and whether I could safely obtain access to him.

I suppose my manner betrayed the deep interest I felt in the question, for though he unconsciously threw on me a penetrating glance, he dismissed all appearance of haste, and replied that it was on business connected with that gentleman that he was now so pressed. "And, to tell you the truth," he added, "his agent is one who may as well be ignorant of your arrival as long as we can keep him so. You probably remember the name of Hezekiah Doom. Now I think of it, our business will not be long; and if you will kindly waive ceremony and join our family supper, I shall be able to speak with you more at length on the subject in which you are interested."

This invitation being accepted, our host led us through the door we had already seen opened by the fair vision; and, after passing through a long gallery, we seemed to enter into a different mansion. Here, a vestibule of the most elaborate and tasteful ornament and design received us: it was lighted from a sort of circular altar in the midst, on which blazed a light flame, as it seemed of fragrant wood, diffusing at once warmth, perfume, and a cheerful glow: some white marble statues, from ancient Rome, stood round, and seemed suitable visitors to that classic hall. Thence we passed hastily on through a cedar door into a lesser room of beautiful proportions: the ceiling was dome-shaped, and of that delicate blue that night wears when almost dissolved in dawning day: some few stars still lingered on one side of the mimic horizon; but on the other, Aurora, in rich but delicate coloring, was already in the sky. Large alabaster lamps, with which the room was lighted, enabled us to see all its ornaments as if by daylight, and also to mark the rich inlaying of the floor, where it was not covered by a Turkey carpet near the fireplace.

All this, however, I observed afterward; at the first moment my attention was absorbed by the appearance of the same fairy-like girl we had seen before; she was sitting on a stool, at the feet of a fine old man; and to Bryan's delight, one hand was resting on a harp.

Our host hastily introduced us to these two persons, whom he called his father and his daughter; then, with an apology, he quickly retired.

CHAPTER XLVII.

What strain again!—it had a dying fall;
Oh! it came o'er my ear like the sweet south
That breathes upon a bank of violets
Stealing and giving odor. * * *
O spirit of love, how fresh and quick thou art.
SHAKESPEARE.

THE old man rose unsteadily and slowly from his chair, and we soon observed that he was blind. His hair was snow-white, and his voice was feeble, but his manner and address were very courteous, though formal and cautious. He soon resumed his seat, and asked some questions relating to our journey.

At our first entrance, the granddaughter had risen hastily, and blushed rosily, as soon as she recognized us. She then took up a position behind the old man's chair, and looked on in silence.

I inquired of the grandfather whether he played the harp that stood beside him.

"I tried to learn it," said he, "when I lost my sight by lightning on the seas. They told me it was good both for the mind and soul to be occupied and soothed by such music. But my little Fay here learned the whole art whilst I was striving to master the gamut; and now I prefer to use her fingers rather than my own."

Fay blushed again, and turned away her pretty head; her grandsire returned my own question. I replied, that I did not understand the instrument, but that my friend had used to play upon it, until he left his harp behind him in Holland.

"Ha!" exclaimed the old man, roused to sudden interest, "it's ———" he checked himself, and added, in his usual tones, "my son has many dealings with Holland; and with the Hague especially."

Fay had looked at us timidly once or twice, but she seemed to recoil with aversion from Bryan's severely puritanical appearance. He was heartily vexed about it himself; and so ashamed, that he wore an appearance of awkwardness which made his disguise more perfect. When Fay heard of his playing the harp, she turned her large wondering eyes for a moment upon him with some interest, but they were as momentarily withdrawn.

Her father now entered with a more thoughtful countenance, as it seemed to me, than he had previously worn. He soon threw off the weight, whatever it was, from his mind, however, and gave himself up to the pleasure of hospitality. His conversation seemed to take new life as he proceeded, and soon so charmed me that I forgot the presence of every one else. He had traveled in almost all countries; with keen eyes and quick perceptions, he had not only reaped, but gleaned, the smallest and most amusing details of life, as well as the most important; he had stored them all up in a capacious memory, that readily furnished forth every fact as it was wanted; enriched, illustrated, and supported by a thousand others, if required. His tone of thought was high and earnest, and though he could descend to sketch foibles with a happy humor, his prevailing sentiments were grave and ever religious. He seemed to have held his own in his numerous and dangerous travels, even as he did now, amid troubled politics. He had been nearly stoned for refusing to trample on the Cross in Japan, and he had been insulted for refusing to kneel to it at Rome. He had worshiped after his own fashion at Jerusalem, in defiance of Jew, Turk, and Papist; and he had rescued a Protestant friend from the gripe of the Spanish Inquisition. Switzerland was the country on which he dwelt with most pleasure, declaring that if England became untenable for an honest man, he would only exchange the banks of the Thames for those of the Lake of Geneva. That chance expression has determined my lot.

It was, I believe, some considerable time, although it did not seem so, before supper was announced. The room into which we were then ushered was of grand dimensions, richly hung with draperies from Persia; it was even carpeted at the upper end, where we sat. As well as I remember, only one gray-headed old man attended at table, assisted by two comely serving women. The supper was comparatively plain,

humble my host apologetically called it; but it was excellent, and the wine was of exquisite quality.

After grace was said, we returned to the room we had previously occupied, and I addressed myself to Fay, requesting her to play the harp, if it were but the simplest strain. At a sign from her father she complied, and began a wild simple air with a timid, tremulous touch that suited her style of music well. Bryan was entranced; his soul spoke in his eyes, and the girl saw that voice with a side glance of her half-closed eyes. She stopped, unable to proceed; at length, she said she had forgotten the music, and laid down the harp. Bryan forgot his puritanic character, his strangership—everything in his enthusiasm. With a profoundly deferential air he asked leave to recall the song, and having first taken hold of the instrument as delicately as if it would crumble at a touch, he finally seized it like a conqueror, grasped it firmly, and swept his hand over the strings with proud mastery.

I believe his very hair rose up in his excitement, for the black Genevese cap in which he had hidden it, fell off, and his curls rolled out, and down his shoulder in most malignant fashion. He was no longer a disguised Puritan, or Cavalier adventurer—he was no longer anything but—the passionate minstrel in the presence of all-conquering beauty. The spirit of poetry mounted to his cheek, gleamed in his eye, and at length sounded in his impassioned voice. He at first took up the air that Fay had lost, and having finished it, he led it on into such a strain as seemed to require song to support it, and song came; came in such thrilling melody and power, that my host bowed his eyes between his hands as if to exclude every other thought; the old man sat up almost erect in his chair, and his lids trembled over their sightless eyes with pleasure. But Fay looked like one inspired. She had never heard a fine voice before, and now it entered into her very soul. Her eyes no longer seemed to shrink from every object as soon as they had shone there; but, on the contrary, they rested on the young minstrel, with an expression of delight, and almost of awe.

But I must pass over these episodes, and hasten to conclude my own story: it has not long to run. The song was ended, and the minstrel was gratified by eloquent compliments from our host, and still more so by a look full of interest cast on him by Fay, as she retired for the night, leading her old grandsire away. The merchant then gave Bryan some plans of Gustavus Adolphus's battles to look over at one end of the room, and sat down with me at the other.

"You arrive at a singular conjuncture," said he, "as regards Sir Janus and his daughters; but first, I must presume you ignorant of all that has happened here. I will also take the liberty to inform you that I am aware of the deep interest you take in this family; of your early intimacy with them; of your flight to the Hague, of the pillage of your house, and the alienation of your estates. This Hezekiah, as he is called, has been long known to me. He is a man of singular character, such as these strange times alone could have produced or brought to light. Of wonderful eloquence, energy, and knowledge, you already know that he is possessed. To all these, an enthusiasm partaking of insanity lends extraordinary intensity. But he has so confounded his politics

with his faith, and is so far a fanatic in both, that he is constantly outraging his own naturally noble character. Added to all these, there may be another influence that we will not speak of now, of which he is himself perhaps unconscious, but which yet farther unsettles his disturbed faculties, and tends to blind his true perception of good and evil.

"This person, as you know, was the means of bringing back Sir Janus and his daughters to England. I may not commit a breach of confidence toward him; but I will tell you all that is in my power to reveal, and that it most imports you to know. Sir Janus, as soon as he was at sea, was in despair at finding what he had done; he insisted on being taken back to Holland, and his daughters joined their supplications to his, but in vain. Their companion had taught himself that pity was an unrighteous weakness, and that his naturally firm will was a heaven-born gift. His galliot still held on for England. Sir Janus, in a paroxysm of fear and anger, threw himself on the deck, refusing to be comforted; the cold winter's night wind seized him then, and struck him to the heart, notwithstanding all his daughters' care. When he reached London, he was carried to his bed, scarcely alive in mind or body, and there he has lain ever since, unable to stir, and invisible to almost every one except his children and this Puritan divine who haunts him. His daughters have attended him with the tenderest and most patient care, and for the last nine months have never left him.

"Now, to my connection with the family:—When the poor gentleman was at the Hague, he invested large sums of money in the hands of a goldsmith, a correspondent of mine, who wrote to me from time to time concerning the disposal of this large deposit. This brought me into communication with the daughters of Sir Janus. I had already known Hezekiah, who was employed formerly by the Committee in various pecuniary matters, as well as others; though latterly they are more cautious of trusting him: I doubt me, he is too enthusiastic and honest, after his own fashion, to suit them. I found, on admission to Sir Janus, that his eldest daughter had unbounded influence over as much intellect as remained to him, except in his pecuniary affairs, of which she professed herself ignorant. At length her sister told me, that the only person, unfortunately, who could influence her father in such matters was this Hezekiah, whom he feared, yet trusted entirely. It then became my business to learn this strange man's history before I trusted him. At length I mastered it: (it is a strange one, of which I had heard some legend formerly.) He offered to obtain the consent of Sir Janus to lend the moneys to the Parliament. I objected, in the name of my correspondent, to such an investment. Finally, it was agreed that the moneys should be lent to the States of Holland; and this evening Hezekiah was to have made with me an appointment, to receive the necessary signature of Sir Janus.

"After leaving you, I found Hezekiah very impatiently waiting for me. Sir Janus is at the point of death, and any earthly business with him is now impossible forever. The physicians are to meet at his lodgings at midnight, for the form of consultation. I shall take advantage of that opportunity to offer the orphan ladies an asylum in my house for the present, until some more

suitable arrangement is made. My wife and daughter are already well known to them, and, as I hope, esteemed and trusted.

"You have not seen my wife," he added, with a slight embarrassment. "The truth is, she is a Catholic; I married her at Venice. This is Ash-Wednesday, and is with her a rigid fast: to-morrow I hope to make her known to you. Felicia, or Fay as they called her when a child, and since, is my only child. I have made you my confidant as far as my own affairs are concerned, and, as it grows late, I will accompany you, with permission, to your inn, which is on the way to Westminster."

We sallied forth. Bryan had collected his flowing locks once more into his skull-cap, and rearranged himself into a puritanical appearance. As we left our host's superb mansion by the unpretending entrance, two tall, strong men, with swords by their sides and staves in their hands, stepped from the house and followed their master at a respectful distance.

It will readily be believed that I did not stop at my inn. We proceeded to Westminster without interruption; all the noise, and strife, and struggle of the day was hushed. The silence of a crowded city is very impressive, but most of all when we are approaching the chambers of death: it seems to be no place to die in.

When we reached the house, our host entered alone. I did not like to present myself at such a moment, and I knew that the good merchant would mention my presence, if possible. He soon returned: there was no change. On hearing that an old friend of the dying man was below, one of the physicians had suggested, perhaps for mere suggestion-sake, that the excitement of seeing me might do him good.

I was introduced into the room; to the bedside, by which Phoebe was kneeling, and weeping. Zillah stood by her father, supporting his head. I met her eyes but for a moment; they had been dry and dim with long watching, but now they were filled with half-suppressed tears; and, for a moment, they turned kindly upon me, and then again fixed themselves on the pale, gaunt face that leaned against her bosom.

My name was mentioned to the dying man; he gave no sign of recognition: again it was mentioned in a louder tone, and he seemed to hear. He had been holding one of Zillah's hands in his, and he let it go. Hezekiah glided to his side. Again my name was pronounced, and he made an effort to put out his hand, as a blind man might have done. I gave him mine, and he seemed to seek for another to clasp with it; he found one ready: he laid it softly on mine, and gave a sad smile. He perhaps thought it was his daughter's; but it was the cold hand of Hezekiah that met mine!

The effort of Sir Janus had been his last; the smile still hovered round his lips, but he was gone. The merchant, with quiet, thoughtful care, summoned the nurses and the serving women, and led the orphan daughters gently away. The door closed behind them and their woe: we left the house, accompanied by the physicians, but Hezekiah was nowhere to be seen.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

If he were honest,
He were much godlier * * *
But she is armed for him, and keeps her guard
In honestest defense.

SHAKESPEARE.

THE next day, and for several successive days, Bryan and I were guests at the merchant's hospitable and richly furnished board. But we saw neither his wife nor Fay, who had taken up their residence in Sir Janus's lodgings to keep his poor daughters company until the funeral was over.

At length that ceremony was ended, and they all returned to the merchant's house. On the following day we dined there again; and we saw Fay, in all her beauty, rendered more touching by the shade of sorrow that sympathy had cast over her bright countenance. Her Italian mother was likewise there, somewhat like her daughter, but only as autumn to the spring: in the shape of her features and figure, and the tone of her voice, she resembled her child; but in the latter, the blue eyes of the north had stolen in under the dark brow and lashes of the sunny south, and the raven tresses of the mother been softened into rich dark brown. Bryan's warm heart had at once surrendered itself utterly and unresistingly to Fay, in sweet captivity; and he became thenceforth comparatively useless for all the practical purposes of life.

After the meal was ended, which seemed to him so short, to me so long, I ventured to ask permission to see Zillah. I obtained it, and found her so changed, so marble pale, that she might have seemed a monument to her own grief. I did not dare to intrude upon that sorrow with one word relating to myself; I spoke only of him who was gone: but at length I gradually led the subject of our conversation to the castle, and to the scenes of our early days—very few years ago—but they had been years multiplied a hundred-fold by changes and emotion. At length, I ventured to ask if she thought of returning to her home; and then, to my great relief, she burst into tears.

"Oh, no, no!" she exclaimed; "it is now no home to me, but the most desolate spot in all the earth."

As she spoke we were interrupted. The merchant entered hastily.

"I grieve to say," he said to me, "that you are wanted, and by those who will not be denied. The Treaty at Uxbridge has been abruptly terminated, and all passes are withdrawn. You must leave London within twelve hours, and must at this moment go before the district officer to give your parole, or become a prisoner. You will return perhaps to share our evening meal, and I must beg you to reserve your farewell till then, or I shall get into a difficulty with these dangerous men."

This was an unexpected blow to me; but through all Zillah's sorrow, I thought I perceived a shade of another regret, and I was comforted. With leave to see her in the evening, I withdrew, and found an escort of musketeers, who had tracked us hither from our inn. As we walked along to Westminster, Bryan vented all his grief and indignation against his enemies; he vowed he would accept no parole, but take his chance of all things rather than be

forced from London now. On calmer reflection, however, he recanted his determination, for he considered that he could withdraw his parole at the last, and possess his liberty meanwhile.

We soon found ourselves before a stern tribunal of belted officers, who received our names and registered our word of honor, to pass beyond the Parliament lines within twelve hours, or surrender ourselves true prisoners.

Amongst several brother officers whom we met, on the same errand with ourselves, was Goring. I knew not then what had induced him to venture into London, but I afterward found reason to believe that he had little to fear; the Parliament had always hopes of him, and finally they were not disappointed; though, in the mean time, he did them all the mischief that he could.

Having spent some hours in making arrangements for our departure, and having ordered our horses, ready for the road, to be at the merchant's before midnight, we betook ourselves to our last meeting at his house. As we passed through the vestibule, we were surprised to hear a joyous voice, speaking volubly in the withdrawing room, and on entering we found Goring there.

I had ample opportunity to observe him, for no one, except Fay and her grandfather, were in the room; I whiled away my suspense, by taking a deliberate view of this singular man, as he stood before them, richly dressed, and putting forth all his powers to amuse and fascinate the simple Fay. He seemed to me, however, to excite her wonder, rather than her admiration, which surely must have been preoccupied or she could not have denied it to one, who was able in turn to win almost every ear—cajole both King and Parliament, and, in spite of every vice and treachery, to obtain the confidence of all parties. He had none of that dangerous enthusiasm, which if it sometimes wins, far more often loses, women, because she has always more of it than we have. On his finely cut mouth, sat a supercilious expression, that varied only from mockery to sarcasm as his humor changed. He was still comparatively young, but he had anticipated much of the experience and self-possession of age; though not its caution—for reckless, scornful courage looked out from his large gray eyes. His youth had been passed in camp and continental cities, and he had there laid aside every gentle or noble feeling that might have struggled to find a place in his boyhood's nature.

This was no uncommon character at the time, as regarded the outward man; but to this were joined gifts at all times rare, and endowments that might have made an honest man illustrious. He was naturally possessed of extraordinary eloquence, but he had so far concentrated its power, that his common conversation was terse, epigrammatic, and wonderfully persuasive. Nevertheless, as he was a scoffer at all Divine influence and all human virtue, his cynicism would have been often distasteful, but for the tact with which he contrived to veil his sentiments or to attribute them to others. He was an accomplished actor, a profound dissimulator, and so much master of his own passions as to be able to turn those of all others to his own use.

Such was George Goring, now Earl of Norwich. His versatile and daring mind was well suited with an active and iron frame, scarcely injured by unbounded dissipation and debauchery.

His countenance, pale, but strongly marked and expressive, was equally well adapted for the various expressions employed by its possessor, to cajole, to plead, or to terrify.

I have spoken of this famous and infamous General at some length, as I shall have hereafter reason to return to him, and to the strange manner in which his wild career was finished.

I now observed him with deep interest. Poor Fay, besides the great wealth which must be hers, had beauty sufficient of itself to hold out the strongest temptation to this dissolute spend-thrift; he had been divorced, it was said, from his wife; he was ruined, it was well known, by his extravagance. His title, his talents, and his fame, might blind even the keen-sighted merchant to his vices, and tempt him to hope that a pure and noble-minded woman might reclaim him. At all events, his attentions to Fay seemed evident and unconcealed, and he plied them with characteristic hardihood and energy, indifferent to our presence.

Poor Bryan! his imagination might have pictured another destiny for this beautiful girl—for what will not a warm, young imagination dare? but he sat apart, with pale lips, forced into courteous smiles, as our host greeted him with his usual kindness. Pride supported his brave heart in this, its bitter trial. He had no position in the world, but that which he had himself won by his sword. He knew none of the gilded commonplaces so prevailing in a courtier's practiced conversation. "What chance had he against that famous, brilliant noble?"

When the merchant entered, he saluted Goring somewhat coldly, I thought; and the latter had evidently not been invited, for he referred to some distant invitation, and added, "As I was staying at the same inn with our friends here, and heard they were coming to sup with you, I took the liberty of making use of your former hospitality; especially as I have some business to consult you about."

Our host of course expressed himself happy, though he looked very much the reverse, and left the room apparently to make some changes. When he returned, Goring offered to hand Fay into the supper-room, but she took her grandfather's hands, and placed herself between him and her father, maintaining throughout the meal an air of reserve and dignity that surprised and charmed me.

Goring meanwhile drank deeply, and exercised his wit unsparingly on every topic that arose. He soon began to express his admiration of our host's daughter in such unmeasured terms, that she pleaded an excuse of illness and left the table. Poor Bryan's look, as her beautiful eyes spoke timidly her last adieu, was one that she must have long remembered. Fear of frightening her, or of annoying his host, had forced him to repress his rising indignation; he expected, too, that Goring would, of necessity, join our party to Oxford, and he flattered himself that he could then quarrel with him at his ease.

At length some free observation, that Goring made, induced the old man to rise from the table, and I seized the opportunity to lead him out; Bryan followed, and Goring made a move as if to accompany us; but the spell of wine was upon him and proved too strong. He sank back in his chair, and filled a high Venetian goblet to the brim. Our host, probably, reckoned on his

soon reducing himself to a state in which he might be sent home without consciousness or offense; but at that stage Goring was never known to arrive. He sang glowing songs, he told rank stories, he declaimed furiously against the Parliament, Prince Rupert, and the King himself. In short, he was very drunk indeed; while the good merchant, though offended and indignant, felt restrained by the bondage of hospitality, from treating his guest as he deserved. I did not then know how much he bore, or how much patience he exercised in tolerating Goring's intrusion.

We had scarcely seated ourselves in the withdrawing-room, when a gentle knock at the opposite door was heard, and the old man rose at the signal. After many good wishes for our journey and our cause, he walked toward the door; it opened, and for a moment Fay's form was visible, but she evidently thought that Goring was in the room, and closed the door suddenly behind her.

We had not been long alone, when our hostess entered and beckoned me to follow her. I was soon in Zillah's presence. Phoebe, too, was there, anxious and wistful; they were both dressed as for a journey. In answer to my eager questions, Zillah replied:

"Yes, we are going once more to flee from this distracted and unhappy country: it is, alas! no place for friendless orphans now."

I will not detail the conversation that followed, the substance of what I learned will be sufficient to explain the present state of things and my future errors. During her long and weary watchings over her sick father, for so many months, she had been haunted by the presence of Hezekiah, until to her nervous apprehension, he became an object of almost supernatural horror. Phoebe simply hated and shrank from meeting him. But Zillah feared his influence over her father, since Waller's Plot, and, in her very fear, was determined always to confront him.

The unhappy man, however, as soon as he found his victim so entirely in his power, treated her with the most watchful attention and care; he became even gentle and subdued in his manner, and never approached the sick man's chamber but with a tender and almost reverential air. As his character thus appeared to change, he seemed daily to lose ground with the political leaders; or, perhaps, they had become so strong as no longer to recognize his assistance. He followed his ministrations, however, with accustomed zeal, and was still enthusiastically heard in the pulpit; though latterly he had never attempted to resume his functions as chaplain to Sir Janus.

Zillah feared him all the more from this unnatural change; perhaps, he had allowed some expression to escape him, which showed that his manner only had been altered. Phoebe had written several times to the old chaplain, but had received no answer. Her mind became tossed with doubt, and found no comfort in the abstract form of worship that sufficed to Zillah's more imaginative spirit. Then came the merchant's kindly wife, with all the proselyting zeal that characterizes her faith. She had been debarred from directing her own daughter's mind in the same direction, but she soon produced an effect upon Phoebe's. A missal first found its way to her private studies; then a crucifix and beads,

and other palpable objects on which her fluctuating mind could rest and muse.

At length Sir Janus died, and as soon as Zillah was sufficiently calm to form a determination, she thus addressed her sister:

"We have been haunted, and our lives darkened, and our father brought to an untimely end, by means of this fearful man, who seems to rule our fate. In England, there is no refuge to be found from him. It is fearful, it is unseemly that two friendless maidens should be subjected to his tyrannical control. We must escape from it to France, where alone he can find no agent, for he will have no followers. Madame de Coligny, our mother's kinswoman, will surely afford us an asylum where we may rest until this tyranny be overpast, and happier times allow us to return and lay us down to rest where our fathers sleep. What think you, my sister?"

Phoebe joyfully acquiesced; and for the last few days, active but secret preparations had been making for their departure. This very afternoon, to their glad surprise, the merchant had decided that his wife and daughter should accompany them. He had been denounced not only as harboring cavaliers and communicating with the King, but as having Popish masses actually performed in his house for his Popish wife. He felt that all his influence and popularity might not be able to defend his family from insult, and that any attempt on the part of his friends to do so, might end in bloodshed. He was a man of prompt decision, and he had at once made every preparation for the sacrifice of all his household happiness.

The tide was to turn soon after midnight, and already a swift barge lay at the river's side, prepared to bear away everything that made life dear to him. He could not leave his post.

This was the subject of Zillah's story, which she ended with a kind farewell.

"No, no!" she replied, in answer to my exclamation; "it must not be; it must not be said again—our names must not be coupled in flight. And even if it were not so, you have other duties to perform. Reginald, if ever we meet again, I would fain be able to honor you for spotless integrity as—as I do now. Yes! though you return to toil and danger, and perhaps to death; though you are about to fight against the cause that I once—that I *still* hold to be the best—I know that you follow the dictates of your own true heart, and I would not have you waver—no, not for a moment—from that fidelity which alone can satisfy your conscience. I have seen enough of error among those whom I called my friends, to believe that there may be some truth among yours. May he who holds the world in his hands give victory to the rightful cause!"

Our host now entered the room, and told us that the hour approached when the travelers must depart, and our parole would terminate. He had "at length got rid of that drunken trooper," he said, "and may Heaven defend our good King from such supporters. He laughs at the idea of his parole, and has invited himself to dine here to-morrow. Let him come!"

I was now requested to depart; with all imaginable kindness, however, on the part of the good merchant, who explained to me that he was anxious his house should seem quite silent up to the moment of his household's departure. "For

we do not know," he said, "in times like these, what snares may be employed against us."

He left me alone with Zillah; but only a few minutes intervened before I rejoined him. I did not dare to press my suit under Zillah's sad circumstances, and my own penniless condition; yet I was cheered and comforted by those few minutes, and I found myself walking with a prouder step than I was wont to do.

CHAPTER XLIX.

Let's away.

And get our jewels and our wealth together.
Devise the fittest time and safest way
To hide us from pursuit that will be made
After our flight. Now go we in content,
To liberty and not to banishment.

SHAKESPEARE.

A STARRY night, with the March wind blowing cold beneath it, met my view. I only thought how roughly that chilly wind would breathe on Zillah's cheek. Bryan and I rode away in silence, and once more I thought I caught a glimpse of a muffled figure near the doorway. I galloped up to where it stood, and it was gone. Some phantom perhaps of the only man on earth whom I ever feared.

It was past eleven. In less than two hours, Zillah was to embark; but long before then, I must be past the Roundheads' city guard, or forfeit my parole. We rode rapidly through the silent streets until we came to where the Strand begins to open out upon the country behind Charing Cross. Near here was the last outpost of the enemy.

Bryan reined up his horse, and asked me solemnly if I would forgive his leaving me. "I do not speak of leaving the standard," said he. "for I may rejoin it in a week; and if I never hear it rustle again in a battle-field, I shall be little missed. I have fought hard for it, and been rewarded grudgingly, and almost with scorn; nevertheless, my heart is still as true to my King as the dial to the sun; rather than draw a sword against him, I would cut my right arm off. But I have no immediate call to go back to him. I have a misgiving about those poor ladies sailing away to-night in yonder boat, and though your duty requires you to be at Oxford, mine, I feel it here—in my heart—is to follow and protect those who are dearer to me, (being no Englishman,) than all the politics that ever murdered nations. However, if you have a word to say against it, of course I resign myself to your will. I will follow you to the world's end; but if my foreboding comes true—and I not there to share the danger—I will never hold up my head again."

I could not resist the pathos of poor Bryan's voice, or his pleading, to which I felt only too much inclined to yield myself. I gave him free leave to follow his own inclination, but objected as to his parole.

"And did you think that I could forget it," he rejoined, "or leave it to those lying Roundheads to say that an Irishman could not keep his word? I am going almost straight to their guard-house to resign myself prisoner; but as to their power to detain me—whoo!"

So saying he took leave of me in very brief words; he did not trust himself to say more, and

rode back toward the city. I spurred forward, exhibited my countersigned pass to the city-guard, and sped on toward Oxford with a heavy heart, envying Bryan his enterprise, and his freedom from responsibility.

I finish his story now, before I return to my own narrative.

He galloped back to the Star tavern where he found Archer, as he expected; he made the best sale he could of his horse to the tavern-keeper, and then proceeded with the sub-lieutenant to the river side. They soon possessed themselves of a wherry, with which Archer repaired to Westminster stairs, while Bryan proceeded to the guard-room; reclaimed his parole, and requested further leave. This was refused, of course; and Bryan was marched off as a prisoner with many Pentateuch imprecations on his obstinacy. He was very meek in his deportment, and appeared very lame, and resigned to his fate. He was, at first, carelessly placed in a large room with many other prisoners; but a bribe procured him a cell to himself, as well as immunity from search.

A solitary window, very narrow, and apparently beyond his reach, showed him the stars. He hastily unwound a cord from beneath his doublet, and taking a file from his boot, between his teeth, he sprang up to the window; there was a single bar which gave way to a quarter of an hour's cautious filing; he squeezed himself through the window-frame and found a descent of some twenty feet to the river's edge. Having made fast one end of the rope to the broken bar, he let himself down by the other, then whistled like the moaning of the wind until it was answered, and Archer, with the wherry, came softly to his aid. Then, taking the oars in his own practiced hands, he pulled away with a will down the river.

Coming opposite the appointed spot, he observed the barge waiting there for its precious freight, but he sped on, and close to London Bridge he found a galliot lying at anchor with her sails loose; he pulled alongside of her gently, and explained, in a few words, that he was sent before by Master Crisp to see that all was ready. Then he took leave of the good Archer, who pulled away, and left him to his own resources.

He had not forgotten his seamanship, and he straightway set himself to examine the galliot with such an air of confidence that the skipper formed a very favorable opinion of his skill. He found her a long, low vessel, such as was often employed to carry dispatches, and for secret service—she drew but three feet of water, and was adapted for oars as well as sailing. On the fore-castle a small drake, throwing 3 lb. shot, and loaded to the muzzle, worked upon a pivot. Aft, there was a small but comfortable cabin, which had been fitted up for its fair occupants, with care, and even luxury.

The tide was running out strongly, and the little craft lay straining at a single line made fast to the wood-work of the bridge. A fresh wind came down the river in gusts and soon settled into a steady breeze. At Bryan's suggestion, all the sails were set taut, so that they might be able to draw at a moment's notice. He soon perceived that the skipper was a man accustomed to dangerous enterprises, and for certain reasons of his own, anxious to be out of the river as soon as possible without observation: he had but two men and a

boy on board with him, and he seemed rejoiced to have such a recruit, as Bryan, to his practiced eye, proved himself to be.

Having received a confidential intimation from the young cavalier, that there might be some danger of arrest, the skipper pointed to the loaded gun, and throwing open his own doublet, showed a brace of pistols and a dirk.

"I can't afford to be taken," he added, with a quiet smile.

"Good!" was Bryan's only rejoinder, expressed with hearty satisfaction.

They now listened anxiously, straining their eyes along the faintly star-lit stream, and at length they heard the sound of oars; a dark object loomed between one of the arches of the bridge, and then the expected barge was alongside. From the bow of the galliot, Bryan watched the embarkation with a beating heart: there were six female figures and two men. He started, for he knew that Sturdy alone was to have accompanied his ladies. But soon one of the two returned into the barge, and pulled away; it was the merchant, who had taken his last leave of his wife and child.

That moment one of the sailors was about to cut the line that held the galliot to the bridge, when a deep and well-known voice exclaimed, "On your life, forbear!" The sailor, superstitiously alarmed, retreated, and Hezekiah's awful form emerged upon the deck from a small boat that had stolen alongside unperceived, while the travelers were embarking. Bryan thought it better to remain unobserved for the present, but he gently passed along the line from stem to stern, so that the galliot swung slowly round, and soon lay with her head down the river, her sails brailed lightly up, and her oars like folded fins along her sides.

"Master Sturdy," whispered Bryan to the old servant, "you ought to know how to work a gun?—Good! then look to the drake; the cartridges are under it, and you can light your match at the lamp in the fore-castle. If I tell you to fire, level low, between wind and water. I see a boat yonder, ready to start out upon us."

He then motioned to the men to look to their oars, and with his finger on his lip signaled to the skipper to stand by the helm. The skipper instinctively obeyed. Men are easily swayed, in moments of critical emergency, by those who seem privy to the danger.

During the three or four minutes that these changes had been taking place, Hezekiah had stood upon the deck, gazing down into the cabin, and apparently absorbed by some inward emotion. At length the merchant's wife appeared, and demanded the reason of his intrusion. He replied, that so far from intruding, his object had been to save them from molestation, and therefore he had come alone; but two armed boats waited near to enforce the orders of Parliament, and prevent clandestine departures from the realm.

"You shall go free, lady, nevertheless," he continued; "but there are on board two wards of the Parliament, whom their guardians reclaim by my hands. One of them especially is under grave suspicions of treason against the State and of Popish practices, which this unseemly flight but too much seems to countenance. I do assure you, that all honorable treatment awaits them; but the power of the State may not be braved

with impunity, and I now demand their return to their true friends. You, lady, and these honest men, may then proceed upon your voyage."

Bryan thought he observed symptoms of wavering in the face of the sailors, who had, in truth, the strongest reasons for wishing themselves well away. Hezekiah also, perhaps, thought he had moved them, for he resumed, addressing himself to the skipper:

"Decide, and you shall not be molested; the fugitives can return without noise in my own boat. Refuse—and there are those at hand who await but a sign."

"Here it is, then, Jonas!" exclaimed Bryan, as, with a violent jerk from below, he flung the preacher overboard; at the same moment he cut the rope that held the galliot to the bridge, and shouted to the crew: "Now you've no help for it, so pull for your lives, my hearties, whilst I cast loose the sails. There we go; now steer her in shelter of the shipping, pilot; for the enemy is upon us. Down, lady, to the cabin, and make all lie low upon the boards: we shall have their rebelly bullets in amongst us presently; life and death are at stake on the next ten minutes."

The galliot bounded like a startled deer, over the dark water, and the oars swept wide and strong, for the electrical impulse of danger nerved the sailors' arms. Two boats full of armed men shot out rapidly from the bridge stairs; one paused a while to pick up the discomfited preacher from the water, while the other sped swiftly after the fugitives. A volley of small arms rattled through the air, but the men, unsteadied by the jerking oars, could take no aim. Many vessels lay anchored here and there in the river, and amongst them the skipper steered his little craft cleverly, so as to have always one of them between the pursuers and himself. Sometimes, as the wind failed, the guard-boat gained upon the galliot; sometimes a gust of wind laid her nearly broadside to upon the water, and shot her forward almost out of sight. The various shipping, alarmed by the firing, swarmed with sailors, who cheered the fugitives, and afterward the pursuers, as they swept past. And all this time, old Sturdy was peering along his gun, blowing his match from time to time, and reserving his fire until the boat should attempt to close.

The chase and chasers now approached Greenwich, and Bryan could distinguish from the stir ashore that the enemy, roused by the advancing musketry, were launching a guard-boat there: at the same time, the boat that had picked up the preacher began to show, and was approaching rapidly.

"Give way, give way, my gallant hearts!" shouted Bryan; "where the river turns, we shall have the wind on our quarter, and laugh at 'em—whoo!"

And so saying, he tugged at his own oar, till it bent again, urging the galliot along as if she was alive. And now they reach the river's bend below Greenwich, and as the wind comes fair, the galliot bends to the breeze gallantly, and the lee oars are shipped, and Bryan is at leisure, as she darts away. But her pursuers hold on steadily: they know, and Bryan knows too, that at the next bend of the river, the galliot will have to luff up into the wind, and must then lose way.

"Sturdy," said he, "I am sure you don't fear a risk, to save those below."

"I believe you," growled out the old servant.

"Well," said Bryan, "the skipper tells me there is a creek runs up to the left, below here; you must get into the skiff, and pull for your life in that direction: these Roundhead devils will think our friends are escaping, and will give us time to round the next point, when we're safe—or stay—I'll do it myself, for may be they'll hang you, if they catch you."

"No, no! measter!" said the old man: "you be of more use to them nor me: I can but die once, and I'll thank Heaven if I'm let to die in so good a cause."

So saying, the skiff was hauled up alongside; the old man stepped in, shoved off, and pulled his best toward the marshes. The result was as Bryan anticipated. The pursuers, in obedience to the preacher's hoarse, commanding voice, attempted to intercept the skiff which they could just distinguish through the darkness. One only of the three pursued the galliot, and began to close upon her as she came up into the wind.

Bryan now stood by the gun, restraining himself with difficulty from giving fire; but the boat, in attempting to cut off an angle, took ground upon the mud and stuck fast there: the oars of the galliot, now worked with increasing energy, lifted her triumphantly round the point; she fell off freely then before the breeze, and away she flew merrily, setting at defiance all further pursuit.

The skipper grasped Bryan's hand, and swore he ought to be an admiral. The night passed swiftly: the morning dawned brightly over the sea, and the young cavalier was a proud and happy man, as he welcomed his precious charges on the sunny deck, and pointed out the dark coast of danger, fading blue in the distance.

The voyage was propitious, and the galliot found herself at Dunkirk the following night; but Bryan did not leave the travelers until they were safely lodged in Paris.

CHAPTER L.

Had it pleased Heaven
To steep me in poverty to the very lips;
Given to captivity me and my utmost hopes;
I could have borne it.

But there, where I have garnered up my heart,
Where either I must live or bear no life;
The fountain from the which my current runs,
Or else dries up: to be discarded thence!

On my return to Oxford, I found energetic preparations making for the ensuing campaign. Prince Rupert was as indefatigable as ever; but as he confessed to me that his confidence was gone,

"The last battle," he said, "should have been fought at the council-table at Uxbridge; and if our ambassadors could not win it, they should have made the best retreat in their power. The heart of our cause is broken: if we happen, in spite of the courtiers, to win one great battle, we may begin the war again; but to crush our enemies now, is what nothing but themselves can do."

However, the King was still hopeful and confident, Digby presumptuous as usual; and

Goring, with Ashburnham, and all their boasting crew, professed to want nothing but an opportunity, in order to sweep the Roundheads off the earth. Their professions were soon tested, and with what result, all the world is now well acquainted. Goring having first lost Weymouth by neglect, obtained a command independent of Prince Rupert, and was disgracefully discomfited soon afterward in Somersetshire. The Roundheads having "new-modeled" their army under Fairfax and Cromwell at Windsor, took the field in fine order in the spring, but not until after we had commenced operations.

At first, fortune seemed to favor us; we took Leicester after a bloody conflict, and if we had then advanced northward, according to Prince Rupert's advice, the King might now be in his place at Westminster. But Digby and Ashburnham prevailed upon the King to move toward Oxford. On the 14th of June was fought that most fiercely contested battle of Naseby, with the details of which all England is now so conversant. Our route from thence was as disgraceful as our fighting had been creditable. Henceforth all was confusion; a hopeless, unavailing struggle. The King's fortune never rallied, but still the indomitable Rupert, day and night, strove to raise fresh forces, and to encourage and supply the few that still remained.

I pass over the various transactions that succeeded, and that are still fresh in every memory. Bristol was taken by the enemy, and Prince Rupert deprived of his command, at the instigation of Digby. The Southern army dissolved, and Goring fled to France. The King retreated to the North; returned to Oxford; gave himself up to the false Scots, and found himself their prisoner. Prince Rupert himself at length left the kingdom, and the last loyal garrison was surrendered by the King's order.

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Toward the end of June, 1646, a small vessel might have been observed entering the harbor of Cherbourg. On board of her were nearly a score of cavaliers, most of them bearing marks of fight. Amongst them there was one with his arm in a sling, and a deep gash across his brow,—who lay languidly upon the deck. He was only six and twenty summers old, but care and hardship had doubled the age-marks of as many years. Beside him sat a youth some four years younger; with an eye of fire, and a gallant joyous bearing, that seemed to defy the touch of sorrow. He was gazing earnestly on the shores of merry France, as if his home—or at least his hope were treasured there. From the hold of the vessel was heard the neighing of a horse, as his fine senses warned him of his approach to land: he was as black as night, save where sundry scars showed wounds from steel or shot, that had been healed over, but remained marked by gray hairs. In short, in the vessel now coming to anchor were the outworn Reginald Hastings, the hopeful and indefatigable Bryan, and the good steed Satan, the only follower left to his landless lord.

A year and a half had passed over me since I had seen Zillah, but a constant succession of varying and exciting incidents had made that time appear rather shorter than it really was. It was with a sense of mournful satisfaction, that, finding myself an exile, I felt I had done my duty to my King. My brother, my followers, my estate, my prime of life, my best blood, had all

been lost in his good cause. He was now, by his own act, in the hands of the Scots, and the loyal sword could avail him nothing more. Henceforth I was free to wander where I would; to employ myself as best I might.

It is unnecessary to say that my first thoughts anticipated my steps, in turning to Paris; there, or rather at St. Germain's, Zillah, as I believed, was still residing. For the last few months we had obtained no tidings whatever from France, and scarcely indeed from London.

Bryan, when he had long since escorted his adopted charge to Paris, had intended to enter the French King's service, in order to be near her who had now taken entire possession of his heart. But on the first hint of his intention, Fay had exclaimed:

"What! and leave our own good King to live or die without your aid, to save and to support him. Surely, Sir Bryan is jesting?"

"It's a grave jest," he replied, "for it sends me from Paradise to—but, no matter! Lady, I am going; instead of all farewell, sing me the words of the music you have just been playing to that old harp of mine."

Fay blushed deeply, and paused for a little while as if she was making up her mind to some great decision. Then she raised her beautiful head proudly, and sang those noble words of Lovelace with a noble air:

"I could not love thee, love, so much,
Loved I not honor more."

Bryan listened with grave pleasure; then solemnly took her hand, pressed it reverentially to his lips and departed. As soon afterward as land and sea would permit, he was by my side, riding under the old banner, to the siege of Leicester.

To all my inquiries after Zillah and her sister, he could give me but few answers. On mature consideration, they had thought it best, considering their solitary and unprotected condition, to become pensioners in a nunnery. There they lived safely and in profound retirement, almost unconscious of the troubles that then agitated France. The merchant's wife, with her daughter, were their only visitors, having taken an adjoining house in order to be near them. In answer to several letters that I had addressed to Zillah, I had received only the following two, which I here transcribe; they were written at intervals of six months, and the most recent was half a year old.

"To the Lord Hastings.

"I have received your two letters, one by Mr. Elliot, the King's messenger to our Queen; the other I know not by what means; but both reached me under cover to Mistress Crisp. I do not wish to add to your anxieties by preserving silence, but I fear I am scarcely justified in writing to you. I almost feel shame when any of our secluded sisterhood approaches me, and instinctively I cover up my letter. How can I be right in doing that which I seek to conceal?"

"You ask me if I still remember you: my number of friends is so small that I cannot afford to forget one who has ever proved so faithful and so true. A convent is not a place wherein to forget: there, memory alone is active. The present is a blank as regards this life; the future looks dim through cloister windows. Yet these convents are doubtless happy asylums for lonely,

friendless women in distracted times like these; safe places of refuge for both soul and body as long as we can preserve our own faith pure from their temptations. For the soul may be pampered while the body starves; fasts and vigils have their luxuries, discipline its vanities, asceticism its intemperance. The Roman doctrine seems to win the spirit through the medium of the flesh; the Reformers sternly demand the conversion of the spirit first, and seek the fruits of its regeneration in the flesh. I much fear, however, for Phœbe's sake, that we have ill-chosen our retreat, for she at once strove to soothe her sorrows by penances; and I fear she may at last shelter her poor heart beneath the veil.

"You know we had hoped to find Madame de Coligny here; she is a Protestant and a woman of high character, but she had, unfortunately, left Paris for La Vendée, and we were afraid to follow her through this distracted country. We then appeared to have no other refuge open to us than this convent, for Fay and her mother intend to proceed to Venice as soon as they can procure an opportunity. I cannot bring myself to depart so far away from my own dear country whilst her present struggle continues. Our Queen is very kind to us, and often sends us news from England. She lives in great poverty, though the royal family of France are as generous as they can afford to be, since their own supplies are stopped. I have had the happiness of contributing to her necessities, and it is almost the only pleasure I have enjoyed of late years.

"I do not presume to murmur at the sorrows and anxieties that have so long been my lot. I would not abate one of them, in the belief that they are but another form of mercy. If it be only through darkness and suffering that our path may lead into light at last, I would not that my fate—or yours, were ever brightened by one earthly joy."

* * * * *

The second letter, written long afterward, was as follows:

"This once more I have determined to reply to your letters. I cannot think without sympathy and deep pain of all your sufferings. Nazeby will ever be a name of dread. I know not whether it be from mere woman's waywardness, or misgiving of the present conqueror's intentions, but I fear from the latter more than I ever did from the King. Ours is a noble people; but if the most gifted and informed minds may not safely be trusted with supreme authority, it is far more dangerous for the Many, whose rivalry seems never to be for general or unselfish good.

"Last night I was summoned to the grille to see some stranger from England; I thought he might bring news from you, and unhappily I went to meet him. Do you not already feel who it was? Yes, that fearful man stood there, looking spectral in his paleness and his wasted form. He even spoke with an altered voice; very quietly, very gently. He exhorted me to return to England with my cousin, Colonel Hutchinson's brother, who has accompanied him on some secret mission to the French Protestants. He told me that otherwise the whole of our property would be confiscated to the state, which was now triumphant over all its enemies. He said that he merely advised me from a sense of duty; and for the last time, he added, as the congregation of the righteous had taken offense

at some idle reports, and he could not give any more advice, or assist me further, by his presence or otherwise. He spoke so calmly and considerately, and laid my duty to my poor tenants so clearly before me, that

"But I must break off. Fay comes to tell me that the post—the last perhaps for weeks—is about to be dispatched to England, and that he waits below: I will soon write again. I can now only commit you to the care of * * *

* * * * *

Such was the last news I had received from Zillah. Since then, my life had been an uninterrupted succession of skirmishes, journeyings, earnest negotiations, narrow escapes. I now found myself on the road to Paris, harassed by painful doubt as to whether I should yet find her whom I sought, whose presence I had so longed for as the best happiness in life.

I was able to travel but slowly, and was glad to avail myself of Bryan's offer to precede me, and make inquiries in the French capital. He was so anxious to arrive there on his own account, that consideration for me alone restrained his eagerness to push on. He was proportionably relieved when I begged him to do so in order to serve me. I envied him as I saw him mount, full of health, and strength, and hope, with a conviction that he should find her whom he faithfully loved, in so short a time. The young knight was now about one-and-twenty years of age. His frame, well-exercised in every athletic exercise, presented a perfect model of strength, symmetry and activity. His merry eyes alone detracted from the energetic and firm expression of his countenance; they seemed always changing under their dark eyebrows that spread beneath a well-developed forehead. His mouth was somewhat large, but it was now shaded by large mustaches; and though it spoke scarcely a word of French, that mouth found words to conciliate, to amuse, or to awe all those with whom he came in contact. Brave to a fault, faithful to the death, full of resources, of indomitable energy,—he seemed born to be a soldier in such trying times as these.

At the end of the fifth day after he had left me, I was rejoiced to see him enter the little inn at Evreux, where I then lay. But I soon observed that his look was anxious and distressed, and instead of announcing his news, he seemed desirous to defer doing so until our meal was ended. At length, he thus delivered himself:

"After I left you, I scarcely rested until I reached Paris, though I had some little difficulty on the way, from the Roundheads of this country who tried to pillage me. At Paris I fell in with a messenger of my Lord Jermyn's, who conducted me to our Queen's residence at St. Germain. There I easily found people to show me to the convent where the ladies pensioned. My guide was one of the Queen's equerries: he told me he had heard that the rules of the convent were very strict, and so I thought it better to call on my lady Crisp by the way. But she was gone! gone with her daughter into Italy, they said; to some place called Venice. I had then no help for it but to march straight to the convent door, where I was answered by a sour-visaged old portress, who just looked at me, and then shut the door in my face. I did not know what to do, for I daren't break the window or climb over the wall, as I might have done if it

had been only a Roundhead's garrison; but what could I do against a houseful of women?

"As I was thinking over this, I saw a priest pass by, and I explained to him as well as I could that I was of his own Church, and had business of great importance with English ladies in the convent. To say the truth he looked a great deal too knowing on such matters for a priest; but he was a good-natured sort of fellow, and just then the equerry came back for me, and explained to his reverence what I wanted; so he knocked at the convent-door in a quiet cautious manner, and the sour-faced old woman put her head out once more. She and the priest then began to jabber in such a passionate manner, that I thought they'd fight; but suddenly they stopped talking; the priest raised his hat as if he were saluting a princess, and the old harriard drew herself back into her den. Then his reverence explained to me, by the equerry's help, that the portress had sworn her life was persecuted out of her by heretics and islanders ever since the English ladies had come to dwell there. The holy house was quite losing its character, too; but ever since one of the ladies had gone off with a heretic preacher, the lady-abbess had given strict orders that no stranger whatever should be admitted, in order, if possible, to preserve to the true faith the precious soul of the sister that was left, and who was then performing her novitiate!"

Such was Bryan's brief, but disastrous tale. He appeared himself to be deeply grieved at the tidings which he felt would so suddenly and utterly prostrate all my happiest hopes. For me, his intelligence was almost overwhelming. Zillah, whom I had so long and so entirely loved, that she shared my very existence, warmed the blood in my veins, and seemed to qualify the air I breathed—Zillah, the lofty-minded, noble-hearted Englishwoman whom I proudly looked upon as the pattern of perfection—what was she now? I did not dare to think; I did not dare to imagine into what steps that accursed Puritan might have led her.

I strove to frame for her excuses; I thought of her long and lonely vigils in that gloomy convent; I thought of her ardent imagination picturing to itself the most arduous duties, but preserving ever the dignity and self-respect that seemed to belong to her, like her own features. But I could not—no, not with all a lover's blind superstition—I could not acquit her. I knew that her departure with that dangerous man must have been at least voluntary—that it would have been resisted by every means, if the convent could have interfered. Alas! it was entirely, utterly, her own act. Heaven help her, and shield her beauty and her genius in the only refuge that now remains to her—the tomb!

Zillah!—to think that thy name, so long associated with purity and nobleness, should be now a word that I fear to hear spoken by the scoffers against womankind! To think that whilst I was struggling through toil, and suffering, and danger, to preserve that honor of which you were ever the guiding star; to believe that even then, you were sinking beneath the arts of a thrice proven villain! And now, there was no excuse; your father was sheltered in his happy grave from the false Puritan's power, and you were left free—too free!

A thousand reflections such as these came

thronging through my mind that dismal night. By the morning's earliest dawn, I was again on the road. I sought the convent and was repulsed still more rudely than my messenger had been. I hastened to the Court of our Queen at St. Germain's, implored and obtained an audience. I was coldly received; her Majesty had set her heart upon Phœbe's conversion, and spoke with more than coldness of Zillah and of her mysterious disappearance from the retreat which "Providence and the holy Church had so graciously offered to her."

Lord Jermyn was at this time absent; I sought him in Paris, and he entered kindly into my feelings.

"I can tell you nothing," said he, "of the elder of these two sisters,—but the younger has been marked down for a nun, and nothing but a miracle can save her from the convent's solemn snares. As your object, however, is to obtain an interview with her, I will give you a note to the almoner of the convent,—who is also, I am sorry to say, in our Queen's pay—and he will do for you all that can be done."

Armed with this introduction, I sought and discovered the almoner; but I found that Phœbe was unapproachable. I endeavored urgently to know if there had been the promised letter left for me by Zillah, but this the abbess indignantly denied—saying, "that the blessed convent of St. Ursula was no house of call and appointment for every profligate heretic; no, Heaven forbid! The last heretic that should ever enter those doors was the old villain who had decoyed away her precious charge."

It is useless to dwell on all the means that I employed, for weeks, to obtain some clew to Zillah's retreat. At length my heart saddened down to the conviction that I had no right to seek it. She had made her own election. By this time she was probably restored to her father's home, and the accursed Hezekiah was lording it over her and hers as chaplain, if not by a nearer and prouder title.

Alas! there it must all end; my hope and faith in Zillah; my life's love, my heart's pride—all was blighted and destroyed forever.

* * * * *

I was still young, however, and without the means to live; it was necessary for mind and body that I should do something. I loathed the very name of war; its honors and its objects had always been associated in my thoughts with Zillah. I had a scorn for those who hired out their blood, as Goring and others had lately done, to foreign powers. Yet, something I must do. I was as poor in the world's wealth as in all higher sources of enjoyment and of life. I had heard much of Switzerland; of its honest industry; of its poverty, dignified by independence; of its reformed faith and free exercise of religion. I felt that its sublime scenery would be soothing to my soul, and I hoped that its solitudes would strengthen and regenerate my broken and wayward spirit.

To be brief—for my tale draws near its close—Bryan and I left Paris and traveled as far as Geneva together. Thence he proceeded to Venice, and I wandered along the shores of the beautiful Lake Lemman for many a day—a solitary pilgrim. Gradually, from paroxysms of grief, my mind settled down into more chastened sorrow. At length I was able to feel that I ought

to create for myself some new object in life, and was even strong enough to act on that conviction.

It was toward the close of a stormy day in autumn, that I paused—weary with my long travel, by the road-side near Lausanne. I carefully scanned the beautiful fields all round, as a bird of passage might hover over a wood before it settled where to rest. A storm that had agitated the sky all day, was raging far away among the mountains. The sun struggled out from among the clouds before he set, and flung one parting smile over the agitated waters of the lake, that seemed as dark as my own doom. Only from heaven, thought I, can any light now shine upon my lot; so it is best. But lo! that sunlight moving along the waters, seems approaching; and now, it pauses, and beams steadily on yon green field, and lights up that cottage window as for a festival. There shall be my home!

* * * *

A year since then has passed away. I am an inhabitant of that cottage. The vines around it have been planted and pruned by my own hands. The heap of fire-wood behind the house has been felled and gathered by these arms. That grass has been twice mown, those cattle have been tended, that corn has been sowed and reaped—all by the sweat of my own brow. A poor decrepid, half-idiot boy has been my only servant; my good black steed my only comrade.

CHAPTER LI.

Si muero en tierras ajenas.

If in this exile dark and drear,
To which my heart has doomed me now,
I should unnoticed die—what tear,
What tear of sympathy will flow?
For I have sought an exile's woe,
And fashioned mine own misery:
Who then will pity me?

CANCIONERO DE AMBERES.

If labor be a struggle, it is a brief one, or seems to be so. Time flies before the woodman's axe, the laborer's spade. That we should "gain our bread by the sweat of our brow" is a curse that bears a blessing also. Toil calms and purifies the troubled mind; it seems, as it were, to satisfy the penalty of the primeval curse, and by the sacrifice of the body to purchase the spirit's rest. Over a gateway, in the neighboring town of Vevay, is an inscription of very deep meaning to me, and such as me; "*LABORARE EST ORARE*," is written there: "Work is Worship," acceptable to heaven, as is proven by the quiet conscience of the earnest worker. In my soul and body-strengthening toil, I have found, if not happiness, that which is better—contentment.

Sometimes my few leisure moments are haunted by thoughts of her whom I shall see no more, but I exorcise such thoughts by some new labor. From time to time vague rumors arrive, borne hither from distracted England: some saying that the divided factions were each striving to place our sovereign at its head; others that he was to be detained an honored prisoner only until the new constitution was completed. At length the fearful tidings came that astonished all Christendom; he had been slain by the demagogues, in the midst of his weeping people, in the front of his own home; in the face of day.

I do not trust myself to speak of that event. I met the disaster in my own way; I took in a new field from the barren hill-side and worked it into fertility, in order to distract my mind from the contemplation of my slaughtered King.

I had long expected to hear from Bryan: at length, on visiting Geneva, I found a letter addressed to me at the house of the goldsmith, who had managed all my small affairs. My friend had been received with kindness by the merchant's wife, and with honor by the State of Venice, which had almost instantly employed him in its powerful Marine. In that great commercial navy, he had good prospect of wealth as well as of honor, and he was about to sail for the Indies when he wrote. He said nothing of the beautiful Fay, but his letter was so full of happy hope, that I felt satisfied about her. A year and a half had elapsed since the time that he was to sail, and I began to expect that he might soon return and find the reward due to his valor and devotion. But, alas! what could I hope for him from woman's constancy?

* * * *

Sept. 1649.—A long interval has elapsed since I last wrote the blotted story of my now peaceful life. The long summer days, with all the duteous cares I owe to my mother-earth, have occupied my time in attending to her wants; or rather to her bountiful supply of mine. The vintage, too, has brought me more into contact with my fellow-creatures, and a circumstance, that happened not long ago, has almost given me interest in a woman—a simple village girl though she be.

About a mile from Lausanne, close to the lake, stands the little village of Ouchy, consisting of some dozen houses and a pretty inn. On fête days and holidays, the neighboring cottagers are accustomed to assemble in the garden of this inn; the elders to drink their wine and gossip, the younger people to dance round the village tree, and amuse themselves as their happy hearts may dictate.

Lonely as I was and wished to be, I was by no means a misanthrope, and often I was attracted by sympathy to the neighborhood of their little festivals. I used to lie upon the shore with a volume of Will Shakspeare or Spenser's poems, just within sight and hearing of the picturesque groups and their cheerful noises.

On one such evening, I had not long taken up my favorite position, when I observed some of the village youths and maidens entering a small sailing-boat, and endeavoring to persuade a timid girl to enter too. It was the daughter of the widowed landlady of the little inn, the *belle* of the surrounding country; and I was greatly struck by the natural and unaffected but exquisite grace of her appearance. She was something under the middle size, but beautifully formed; her figure, finely-rounded, above and below her taper waist, presented a very model of symmetry, which the costume of the country set off to the highest advantage. Her large dark eloquent eyes were over-arched by delicately penciled eyebrows that contrasted well with a snow-white, though somewhat freckled forehead; the warm color of her cheek, and her rich ripe lips bespoke the perfect health that thrilled through every fiber of her frame.

All this I observed long afterward, however;

the distance at which I now lay prevented me from noting anything except the expressive gracefulness of her figure, as she stood by the little boat, hesitating as to whether she should enter it. At length she entered and took her place, while the young villagers shoved off in triumph, and thoughtlessly loosened the large lateen sail to the gusty wind that began to ruffle over the bosom of the lake. I could see that the crew understood little of its management, and I watched their progress with some anxiety, as they stood out from shore. They had scarcely proceeded a hundred yards when a breeze took the sail aback, and almost laid the boat on her beam-ends; she began to fill, and cries of terror from the shore echoed back screams of distress from the little party on the lake.

Throwing off my coat, I plunged in and swam toward the boat; in a few minutes I found myself alongside, and scrambled aboard; putting down the helm, I soon brought her head to wind, making the young men bale out the water with their caps, while I trimmed the sail, and got sufficient way upon the boat to enable me to tack; then putting her about, I ran for shore, and soon had the satisfaction to see the frightened girls restored to the arms of their friends, whilst I was overwhelmed with expressions of gratitude for the simple service I had rendered them.

About an hour afterward, having changed my clothes, I returned to my favorite resting-place by the shore, upon which the rising waves now beat angrily, while the sounds of mirth from the gardens showed that the spirits of the villagers had been only stimulated by the late adventure. Nor was it without pleasure that I saw the innkeeper's daughter approaching with her timid, fawn-like manner, to offer me her thanks. As she called me her deliverer, and expressed her gratitude in the eloquent fashion of her country, I found a new sensation rising within me, and I could not resist her modest invitation to share her mother's hospitality. I accompanied her to the inn, therefore, and was warmly welcomed there, where an extempore feast was provided, and crowned with some fine old wine of the *Côte*, yon sunny line of hills that slope downward to the lake, toward Vevay.

Here, seated by the side of Marguerite, (for so she was called,) I yielded myself with only too much facility to the charm of an intercourse to which I had been long a stranger. Marguerite was by no means ill-informed, though all her information had the attraction of novelty and originality to me. She displayed an acquaintance, that surprised me, with the history and brave actions of her countrymen; her imagination, as well as her memory, was enriched with a thousand legends appertaining to her beautiful lake, and its shores, and its mountains. The wild flowers, and shrubs, and healing plants, that grew among the woods and vallies, were familiar to her, with all their beauties and their virtues; and all her little stores of knowledge were so diffidently, yet frankly laid open to my inquiries, that time flew by unnoticed: so I talked and listened.

From that day forward life has had a new interest for me. Whenever the labors of the day are done, I am sure to find the soft-eyed Marguerite on the walk by the waterside, and she does not dissemble the innocent pleasure with which she greets my punctual appearance there. My cottage looks lonely when I return to it, and

though I guard myself carefully from betraying any such thoughts to her, I sometimes think that in her pure and artless love and sympathy, and in a life and death of obscurity amongst the mountains, I might perchance find repose for my wounded spirit, and as much happiness as my heart is yet capable of. But ever, following close upon such thoughts, there interposes a memory of a higher, nobler nature, which, though fallen and deceitful, has power, even in imagination, to chase away all rivals; it is only when I find myself once more in the presence of Marguerite that the ideal yields to the real, and I forget for the while everything but the happiness of being loved.

What have I written? Alas! it is too true! I have unconsciously won the love of that poor village girl, and I can read the effects of it in a thousand symptoms. Not only is her pure cheek grown changeful in its coloring, and her voice falters, and her bright eyes often fill with tears, as she tries, and not in vain, to soothe the sorrow that has furrowed my brow and wasted my young heart; but her whole moral being seems changed. Always refined by nature, her mind seems to have acquired a delicacy and fine perception that nothing but a deep sympathy for another could have inspired. She soon found out that I was an Englishman, and she immediately applied the active powers of her intelligence to learn every thing relating to my hapless country that her narrow means of information afforded. She knew that we had been at war, and she immediately concluded that I was a great warrior, and a defeated one. She knew that our King had been slaughtered, and she concluded that I must have been his friend. This conviction seemed, strange to say, to give her pleasure; for her quick woman's instinct had probably apprehended that my deep forlorn sorrow was owing to some more tender cause.

One evening she told me with great glee that she expected her uncle on the morrow; that he had been a great traveler, even so far as England, and that he had been absent for a long time. He was very dear, having been like a father to her. He had first taught her to read and think on subjects different from those that occupied the village mind; and he always brought her books and foreign presents when he returned from his travels. For some undefined reason, I was not pleased to hear of his arrival. I felt that by some means or other it would interfere with my newly-discovered source of enjoyment; and, what was worse, I felt that it was well for Marguerite that it should be so!

* * * *

Oct. 1649.—A month has elapsed since last I wrote, and brought with it momentous changes in my mind. How altered have all external things become at the same time!—But I must force myself to resume the thread of my story.

Marguerite's old kinsman arrived, as she had expected, and I was scarcely surprised, instead of his young relative, to find him at our usual place of meeting; I concluded at once that the tall, grave-looking person whom I there encountered must be the man. He seemed to expect me, for he saluted me courteously, though formally, as I approached, and without any preface, entered into conversation with me in very tolerable English. We spoke of our respective countries; and as we continued to walk to and fro, his serious manner seemed to give way to some more pleasant

impressions. He told me that he was a traveling merchant, who passed most of his time between the cities of Italy, France, and England; and that he occasionally returned to his native place, to refresh himself with its simplicity and peacefulness: but, he added, his nature had become restless from long habit; that he required excitement, and was about to indulge himself for a few days in hunting the chamois of the Alps. He said he was aware of our English passion for the chase, and that he would get great pleasure if I would accompany him.

I grasped eagerly at his offer, and stifled the regret I felt at leaving my pleasant evenings with Marguerite. I had long desired, however, to visit the snowy mountains that he spoke of, and hunting was still a passion with me, sufficiently strong to have survived all my misfortunes. We parted, therefore, agreeing to cross the lake on the following morning; and, during our long conversation, the name of poor Marguerite had never been once mentioned.

That evening I employed myself in furbishing up my carbine, and setting my little household affairs in order. I had been stationary under my humble roof so long, that my forthcoming expedition seemed to me quite eventful. When I had made all my preparations, it was near midnight, and I sallied forth to a little thicket that stood in the middle of my vineyard.

A few rays of the young moon struggled through the autumnal leaves, and fell upon a tomb, which, in my first feeling of bereavement I had raised "to the memory of Zillah's faith." Many an hour had passed over me, in not angry sadness, as I sat and carved these words: it was a foolish fancy, but it gave me something whereon to fix my thoughts; the place became to me as a shrine, which, in the absence of all others, served to attract my wandering steps. As I drew near it now, I started. The hour of the night, the dim mysterious shadows, the profound silence—all tended to inspire a superstitious feeling; and as I gazed, I saw, or thought I saw a female figure, clothed all in white, and looking like a spirit standing by the tomb!

After a moment's trepidation, I rushed forward, tore the branches apart, and—clashed Marguerite in my arms! It was with an alarmed and disappointed feeling that I separated myself from her, and placed her gently and respectfully upon the stone.

After a few minutes' silence, she spoke; but as I cannot give her artless words in their own touching phrase and language, I shall not attempt to repeat them. She had found out this spot long since, but never ventured to question me about it. She had copied the inscription, and at length, with the assistance of her uncle's books, had discovered the meaning. She evidently misunderstood its application, however, and thought (scarcely the less jealously for that) that some dead rival had occasioned it. It was accidentally that I had now found her here: the poor girl had been wandering about, desiring to speak to me, but did not venture to approach my door. Finally, she resolved to watch for me until morning, and meanwhile had been attracted to this mysterious spot from the hope of finding something further there.

Her uncle, it appeared, had discovered soon after his arrival, her secret. He had been so angry thereat, that she feared for my life, for she

said he was a man fierce in his wrath, when it was once roused: he had spoken of dishonor, of profligate cavaliers, and of various other matters that she did not understand. At length, when he heard something more about me, he had become a little pacified, and promised her to do nothing until he had satisfied himself as to my designs. But, finally, he had warned her, at her peril, never to see me again, alone. He had affirmed that, from all he heard, I must be some Englishman of high rank, who was merely taking refuge in Switzerland from the violence of party; perhaps seeking shelter from the punishment due to some great crime.

Shocked and terrified at all this accusation so new and incredible to her, the poor girl had hidden herself to observe our meeting, had heard her uncle invite me to this dangerous expedition, and had resolved to warn me of the peril I should incur by joining it. Her uncle, she said, loved her beyond anything in the world, except what he called honor; and, deeply as she respected him, she feared he would not scruple to put me out of the way, if anything that I should say afforded him an occasion of quarrel.

I almost felt remorse when I discovered the strength of Marguerite's affection by the effort that she had made for me. I thanked her perhaps too gratefully, and alluded to the truth of her uncle's warning perhaps too slightly. I laughed at the idea of danger from any mortal foe, and she seemed to take a proud comfort in my scorn of it. At length, I persuaded her to return home, and promised to tell her all that she desired to know concerning me, when I returned from the mountains. I then watched her to her own door, saw her raise the latch cautiously, look wistfully back upon the shore, and disappear.

CHAPTER LII.

Hinauf, hinauf!
Im Sprung, im Lauf!
Wo die Luft so leicht, wo di Sonne so klar,
Nur die Gemse springt, mir horst der Aar,
Wo der Menschengewühl zu Füssen mir rollt,
Wo der Donnergebrüll tief unten grollt!
Das ist der Ort, wo die Majestät
Sich herrlich den herrscher Thron erhöh't,
Die stille Balm
Hinan! hinan!
Dort pfeifet die Gemse! Ha, springe nur vor,
Nachsetzet der Jäger, und fliegt empor.
"Kaiser Max."

At daylight I was by the water-side, and there I found my intended companion, Arnold Berthier, already waiting. He seemed to have put off the merchant with his traveling-dress, and now, in his hunter's simple garb, with an eagle's eye, and a mountaineer's bold bearing, he looked as unlike the man of cities as possible. His only weapons were a carbine and a hunting-knife, but he carried a long pole, shod with iron, to assist him over the glaciers. A case-bottle of spirits, and a sort of satchel slung crosswise over his shoulders, completed his equipment.

He addressed me very courteously, and welcomed me to a new sport, with which he appeared to be perfectly familiar. As we were rowed across the lake, however, his conversation soon changed to graver subjects, and he spoke of the present state of England in so cautious a manner,

that I thought it better to tell him frankly that I belonged to the King's party, for which I had fought to the very last.

Arnold seemed pleased with my frankness, and gave me to understand that matters had changed little for the better in my country; that it lay under a central military despotism in fact, while half a dozen Major Generals ruled over the rural districts like so many Eastern Satraps.

"It is a pity," he added, "that the people never can govern themselves, or learn how to exercise that power which they can so easily acquire. You, I believe, are a nobleman?"

"I am called Neville," I replied, (for I had assumed my mother's maiden name,) "and in my own country I believe I am considered as a gentleman."

"An extensive title," observed my companion; "comprising not only nobility, but royalty itself, as I have heard. However, I do not mean to pry into your private affairs—at least, not at present, for here we are in Savoy."

On landing from the boat, we struck off the road abruptly through the mountains; and Arnold seemed resolved to put my pedestrian powers to the test, for he strode away at a pace that few but those accustomed to such exercise from early youth could have sustained. As we ascended into pure and more elevated regions, he stepped out still more energetically, and only halted at midday, when hunger reminded him of the hour.

"By my faith," said he, as we sat down by a crystal rivulet welling out from the flowery turf, "you islanders walk well. I doubt me, you are more than a match for Arnold Berthier, who could once beat any man in Switzerland." I returned the compliment, and inquired whether we should find any game that day.

"Scarcely," he replied. "You see yonder black speck upon the verge of the snow? Well, that is a chalet, where we shall rest for the night, and by the first dawn you will be on our hunting-ground, and we shall test your aim."

When we resumed our march, my companion became still more communicative and agreeable, and I could not imagine what Marguerite could have thought it necessary to warn me against, in a companion so brave, and frank, and kindly. When we entered the chalet, I lay down by his side with a sense of perfect security and confidence. If I placed my hunting-knife ready to my grasp, it was only as a precaution against the possible visit of wolves or bears; the night wind, moaning round our rude hut and through its numerous crevices, reminded me dismally of the ravenous howlings of such creatures. Once, indeed, there came a sound so wild and unearthly that it penetrated into my sleeping ear; and I opened my eyes, half ashamed of seeming alarmed in the presence of my companion. But, by the clear starlight shining in through the open casement, I saw that he, too, was awake; and in an attitude half erect, was gazing at me with such a stern, if not fierce expression of countenance, that I involuntarily rose, as though to encounter him.

He merely raised his finger with a listening gesture, and said in a low and solemn voice:

"Englishman, did you not hear just now that devilish noise? The wild peasants who live near these unearthly solitudes tell strange sto-

ries of ghostly things, that are not only heard but seen here. Hark! again that demon yell!"

As he spoke, in tones that lent horror to his words, the same terrible sound came quivering to our ears, and seemed to spread itself, slowly, far away over the mountains. It was moie like a despairing moan, wrung from some agonized heart, than any cry that wild beasts could make. I asked Arnold in a low voice, whether he did not think it might proceed from some fellow-creature in distress.

"Fellow-creature!" he rejoined, in the same low tones, "what could fellow-creatures of flesh and blood be doing here at such an hour. I tell thee solemnly that there are things of another world around us here. Sleep, if thou hast a firm heart, and forget them. Meanwhile, I will close up the window with these pine branches, for I like not that pale ghostly starlight."

So saying he rose, and thrust an armful of the pine-branches, with which the hut was stored, into the window place, effectually excluding the air and leaving us in total darkness.

I have been in many scenes that tried stout nerves, without affecting mine; but I confess that when I found myself alone, with this strange man, in profound darkness and silence only broken by unearthly groans, I found my heart beat rapidly. I called to mind the words of Marguerite, and the expression that I had seen on the Switzer's face. Every movement that he had made, I imagined was toward my throat. Once the nerves are excited, everything jars upon them: I could not bear further suspense.

"I will look out," I said, "be it man or fiend that makes that fearful noise. Nothing can be worse than watching for it thus."

And so saying, I rose and groped my way toward where I imagined the door to be. My hands met something warm and stirring, from which I recoiled with a shudder. It was only Arnold,—who, however, had evidently no more thoughts than I had, of resuming his rest.

"Where is your boasted English courage, now?" he demanded almost scornfully.

"You may yet live to prove it," I replied, now forcing my way toward the entrance.

"I may yet die to prove it, I presume you mean," said my companion, giving way; "well, it is just possible," he added in a graver tone.

I now dragged open the rugged door, and stood in the bright open air. How bright it seemed after the darkness and dismay of that miserable hut! The faintest streak of dawn was already touching the mountain tops with a delicate rose-color, but all the rest of that magnificent tract of snow looked pale blue in the starry gloaming. At a short distance beneath us was a forest of pines, but above, to the very skies, all was smooth unsullied snow or jagged glacier. That glimpse of dawn at once restored me to myself, and like a good angel, dispelled all the dark visions that had haunted me. I stepped back into the hut, flung myself on my bed of leaves once more, and was soundly asleep in a trice.

A whisper from my companion awakened me; his carbine was in his hand and he beckoned me to the door, which he had partly opened: it looked toward the mountain, but a steep precipice of snow shut out the view in that direction. Arnold, however, was pointing upward; and drawing near him, I could see, relieved against the

sky, the graceful form of a chamois, that seemed to keep watch for a herd of about a dozen others that were couching near, or just stretching their limbs to the sun's first rays.

"Now fire," whispered Arnold in the most friendly manner. It was without any thought, except of a sportsman's courtesy, that I declined, and motioned to him to fire first. He gave me a look of anger that I did not then understand, accusing me of distrust; but he did fire, and with so true an aim, that the sentinel chamois came tumbling down, almost to the very spot where we were standing.

I ran forward and caught a glimpse of the herd as they bounded by. A sense of keen rivalry, as well as of a hunter's zeal, nerved my hand, and I knocked over the leading chamois with my bullet: he bounded high in air and then rolled down into the depth, far, far below.

"Well done, by St. Hubert!" exclaimed Arnold, with generous impulse; "I have never seen that feat performed before, though I have heard of it in England,—but hark, there is that fearful sound once more! it must—it must be human!"

We hastened away in different directions to search, and at length Arnold shouted from a neighboring ravine, down which a mountain torrent was rushing furiously. I followed its wild guidance as rapidly as I was able, and I soon saw the hunter supporting a tall human form on one knee, and applying his case-bottle to the stranger's lips.

I drew back with instinctive dread as I saw the face of Hezekiah Doom, ghastly, supernaturally pale. His right shoulder seemed to be dislocated, and he could not move the arm that he had always held wrapped in his cloak; it was now extended helplessly, and at the end of it was —no hand! a bare stump—on which the black scorching bars of the executioner's iron remained still visible,—was there instead.

The wretched man appeared almost insensible, and Arnold motioned to me to carry him by the cloak toward our hut. This seemed necessary, for a storm was gathering on Mont Blanc, and if it burst upon us where we stood, the swollen torrent would soon sweep away the very ground on which we trod. Therefore, we bore him along carefully and laboriously, and at length laid him on the bed of leaves from which I had lately risen.

Having placed the sufferer in the easiest posture we could devise, Arnold motioned to me to accompany him outside the hut, and thus addressed me:

"The man is dying; he uttered the shrieks we heard last night; probably in the delirium of his agony. Mortification seems to have set in, and he will be soon at rest. I know him. He was at Geneva some sixteen years ago, where he displayed great talent in our schools, especially for eloquence. He went away, none knew whither, but he has lately returned looking like a specter. A few days since, I learned from Calvin Marrast, our great preacher, that he had announced his determination to proceed on a mission to convert the Popish people of the Alps. Marrast spoke to him of the dangers he would incur, not only from the nature of the country, but from the inquisition. He smiled a woeful smile at the warning and departed. Well! here he lies: he has fallen over a precipice, and will, I think, never leave

this spot; but we must not let him die like a dog. Now, while he is quiet, I will run down to yonder village in the valley, where I know the Curé; he is a skillful leech, and may do something for this poor creature; if, which I doubt, there be any life left in him. Do you watch over him, and give him no drink without some spirit to temper the icy water."

So saying, Arnold Berthier placed his spirit-flask in my hands, and rapidly descending the mountain, was soon lost to view. I silently re-entered the hut, and sat down by the wounded man. After some time he gave signs of returning consciousness; a deep sigh escaped his lips, and he strove to turn on his left side. I put out my hands to assist him; his eyes met mine, and with a long-suppressed groan, he averted his face, and seemed to relapse into insensibility.

For an hour I sat in silence by the side of my bitterest, my only enemy; the incarnation of my evil destiny, who had blighted every prospect of my happiness, and made my life utterly desolate. There he lay before me almost motionless, except when a groan of agony ran through his exhausted frame, and painfully proved that life was still trembling there.

What a mystery is the human heart! When we are in the power of our adversary; when we are trampled on, crushed, and almost subdued beneath his evil influence, our soul rises up wrathfully against him; but when he is prostrated, down-stricken and powerless, we are forced to forego thoughts of the vengeance that once seemed as if it would be so sweet; his misery masters us far more than his prosperous power, and we are constrained to mourn for him even as if he were a brother; all strife, all hatred merged in the strange but blessed sympathy with a fellow-creature's woe.

If it had been my brother that lay there I could not have tended him more anxiously, wiped his moistened brow more tenderly, or prayed for him more earnestly. At length, he seemed to hear my prayer: he turned round his poor bruised frame, and gazed upon me with a look of wonder in his eyes; he appeared to listen with astonishment; perhaps some dark and cherished prejudice was giving way, for at last he spoke, in a subdued and hollow voice:

"Is this another temptation sent to try—to mock me? or do I indeed hear words of prayer over a fallen enemy, uttered by the proud and wrathful Hastings! Yea, it is even so. Blessed art thou then, and happy shalt thou be! The mysterious ways of Providence are justified; the darkness leadeth into light. Poor blinded worm that I was, I can see that I have wronged thee; but verily thou art avenged!"

He ceased to speak, and a few minutes afterward, Arnold re-entered the hut with the village pastor; the latter a fine, hale old man, carrying sundry vials in his sash, and attended by four stout villagers with a rude sort of litter. With skillful and gentle hands, the reverend mountaineer removed the sufferer's garments one by one, and cautiously examined his bruised body.

At length the Priest said: "there is no deadly harm done; exhaustion and weakness are the worst of his ailment. We must bind up his shoulder and carry him to better shelter."

So saying, he applied some cordial to the wounded man's pale lips; and his patient was soon sufficiently restored to say that he had fallen

from the cliff some four and twenty hours ago, and had lain there, hopeless of relief until he became unconscious.

Thus relieved from great anxiety, I had lei- sure to observe that the storm had already burst, and had been raging round us for some hours past. Our way down the mountain was thus rendered doubly dangerous, but at last we reached the good pastor's dwelling in safety with our charge. His bruises were dressed, an opiate administered, and he soon slept or seemed to sleep.

Arnold then proposed to me to resume our *chasse*, but I was too deeply interested about Hezekiah to leave him for the present. I promised to rejoin the hunter on the morrow, however, and with this understanding he somewhat angrily departed. When he was gone, I returned to the sufferer's bedside, and anxiously watched there, not I fear so much for his sake as for my own. I desired vehemently to learn from him what had become of Zillah, and strove to frame some form of inquiry to which it would be least painful to him to listen.

At length, as night advanced, he awoke more at ease, and took some refreshment, from the old Pastor's hands. He remained silent, however, though he kept his eyes fixed on me with a solemn and earnest look of inquiry. At length, his friendly host left us alone, and then he spoke the words I so longed to hear.

"Thou desirest to hear tidings of *her*. Tell me first what has brought thee here, and what thou hast heard of her?"

I told him as briefly and quietly as I could, the story of my adventures, and that the last I had heard of Zillah was her departure with him from the convent. He looked at me with as much surprise as his stern features would admit, and repeated my words:

"Her departure with me?" he said slowly, as if reflecting what my words could mean: "I knew not of her departing. I saw her once in that prison of souls, the convent, but when I returned thither again, she was gone. Ay! gone with that old blind leader of the blind whose ministry long 'ago she found was nothing worth."

I endeavored to conceal the emotion of overpowering happiness that these words gave me, but the keen eyes of my companion read my heart, and a momentary expression of bitterness passed over his own pale lips.

"I would be alone," he said; "and so wouldst thou."

I obeyed his suggestion, and soon found myself in the open air, under the starlit vault of heaven, which appeared scarcely wide enough for the expansion of my overcharged and grateful heart.

CHAPTER LIII.

"Pesame de vos el Conde."

Count, and thou art called to die,
O! it grieves my soul to see —
Thou hast erred—but yet I thought
Pardon might be found for thee;
That the error love commits,
For love's sake might pardoned be.

CANCIONERO DE VALENCIA, 1571.

I WALKED to and fro beneath an avenue of tall trees; high above me rose the snowy Alps, from

amid whose recesses a new hope had dawned upon my weary heart. The spirit of Zillah seemed to float among those pure and lofty solitudes—to hover over my head, and to bless me with an intensity of happiness and hope.

Beneath me, in many a mingled maze of dim and shadowy beauty, lay a wide-spread landscape, receding downward, onward, toward the lake, that gleamed, star-studded, in the distance. Beyond it lay the humble cottage, so long the shelter of my mournful exile. But what strange shuddering, and presage of undefined mysterious ill arose up from that far spot to mar my new-found happiness, and chill me in the first warm glow of triumph?

I thought of that poor village girl, whose anxious heart was beating there; of her who loved me in my obscurity too well; of her who soothed my sorrow, and cheered my solitude. And what could she now be to me?

And then I thought of the stern Arnold, who was now expecting me upon the mountain; of him, so rugged and uncompromising with me; so gentle and devoted to his *Marguerite*. His invitation appeared to me more like a challenge, and must be accepted. I must leave the suffering enemy, who had been a messenger of mercy to me, in order to meet the stalwart friend, who might be about to wring my heart.

I did not hesitate; I slung my carbine over my shoulder; and grasping the stout pole that my wakeful host had presented me with, I set forth for the chalet just as the first stars were fading. Our patient was likely to require some days' rest before he could be moved, and ere to-morrow's light I hoped to stand by his bedside once more.

It was high noon when I reached my destination. I found Arnold at the hut. He received me with great civility, and offered to share his meal with me. As soon as we were refreshed, he proposed to start.

"If your lowland nerves do not fail you," he added, "we may take a short path through scenes of grave sublimity and beauty. But resolve you well, for deadly peril may befall you, if you even tremble."

I replied to his taunting tone very quietly: I had feelings struggling within me that left no room for a thought of personal fear.

We were soon among the snows, ascending by a circuitous path the cliff on which we had shot the chamois. Magnificent prospects opened beneath us, and all around; but above, naught except the spotless, snowy mountains relieved against the deep-blue sky. Our way became momentarily more difficult: deep rifts yawned beneath us, looking dark in their profundity of snow: avalanches hung above us, and sometimes startled the ear by their thundering descent into the far vales below. Still my companion pressed forward, as it seemed to me, with unnatural energy.

At length we came to a wide, deep fissure, beyond which only a narrow ledge of rocks presented a resting place for the foot, and seemed to lead round the base of an icy cliff, that towered high above it. Arnold sprang across the fearful chasm, and reached the opposite ledge: for a moment he tottered there, and reeled over the precipice; but he righted himself by a violent and active effort, and stood safe. He then beckoned to me, with a taunting air, to follow, as he clambered along the crumbling edge of the op-

posite cliff. I felt awed, but unappalled, by such an unaccustomed danger; I hesitated not, however; making up my mind for every consequence, I sprang from firm ground with desperate force, reached the opposite crag, and steadied myself there.

I then followed the hunter along his perilous path. A turn of it brought me to a still narrower spot, where Arnold stood confronting me; beyond him there was no farther way. He appeared less conscious of our imminent danger, however, than the vultures did; for a huge pair of these obscene creatures now began to wheel round us, nearer and more near, till I could perceive the foul odor of their bodies.

But Arnold heeded them not. He pointed downward, where yawned a precipice of a thousand feet, bristling with icy spikes and pointed crags. I thought he must be deranged, and shuddered, in spite of myself, at what now seemed to be inevitable. But I followed his dark eye and gesture, as they glanced from the abyss beneath us, wandered on, over the intervening mountains, the valleys, and the lake, and at length rested on a faint white spot beyond. It was the village where Marguerite was then watching, and, perhaps, at that moment, praying for us. I felt her kinsman's simple and sublime appeal, but I did not shrink from it. I, too, gazed mournfully, yet calmly, on the place to which he pointed, and his countenance grew darker as I did so.

"Englishman!" cried he; "thou seest you spot which offered thee an asylum; thou seest there too, with thy mind's eye, the innocent, trusting child who gave away to thee her heart; and yet thou tremblest not; though in the presence of one who has sworn to avenge her. Thou hast nerves of iron to match thy harder heart; but neither shall avail thee here, if thou hast wronged or ever had a thought of wronging her. Here, upon this awful altar of eternal purity, I swear, that thou shalt die, or vow to render justice to her honor!"

The words and menace of the excited hunter scarcely surprised me; I had already read them in his looks; but I should have spurned them, had I not respected and felt for his passionate emotion.

"Arnold," said I, "you have wronged me deeply and dangerously. If a thought of evil had been lurking in my heart, your threat would have roused it into proud resistance; but I have known life too mournfully, and dared death too often, to let the hope or fear of either influence my will. I have no pride—I have deep pain, in defying you. Had you thus spoken to me some hours ago, I would have grasped your hand, and thanked you for your championship of one whom I would joyfully have called my own; but now I can only feel for yonder lovely girl, as you do, tenderly, respectfully, and without one warmer thought. Arnold—I loved a lady, long ago, in my own land; I have mourned her in my exile, not only as one lost to me forever, but as one dishonored, and unworthy of my love. By a mysterious chance, her honor has been vindicated upon this distant mountain, and my love is restored to her with such devotion, that to think of any other would be adultery. Your own hand has produced the witness of her honor: the crushed wretch whom you rescued from the grave has restored her to my heart.—Now you

know all, and may do your worst; but the Heaven that is above us and around us be my witness, that I never wronged your dear kinswoman with a thought that could offend an angel."

Arnold listened to me with eyes of piercing and stern inquiry; then, turning away his face, he remained silent for many minutes. Making, at length, a strong effort of self-control, he extended to me his hand and said, hoarsely:

"It is true. I see it is true; though the strangest of all truths. Hadst thou faltered in a single word—had thy cheek changed color—thou hadst died; ay, though my body were blent with thine in one bloody mass—below there—in that icy gulf. Thy trial is now ended: I offer thee my hand in proof of my belief, but not of my forgiveness. I respect—but I shall loathe thee while I live. Let us be going now, if indeed we can go, for the sun has been shining hotly on our snowy path, and it may exist no longer toward the south."

I turned cautiously on the narrow and slippery ledge that overhung the precipice, and endeavored slowly to retrace my steps. When I had passed the angle of the rock, I found, as my guide had apprehended, the path was gone. Ledges of icy rock projected here and there, but no living thing could have trodden them and lived!

Above us towered an inaccessible pinnacle of snow, beneath us yawned a ghastly gulf, whose depths were unfathomable to the dizzy sight. Our situation appeared utterly hopeless, and the vultures wheeled nearer and nearer round our devoted heads. I looked at Arnold; his practiced and undaunted eyes were calmly scrutinizing every ledge or fissure of the ice that offered the slightest chance, but apparently in vain.

"Why did you bring me here?" I demanded of him; "could you not have put your question to me elsewhere, without involving, at the same time, a murder and a suicide?"

"I will tell thee," he replied; "since both of us will scarcely survive for future explanations. I was almost certain of thy guilt; from all I heard and saw of thee, I could easily discover that thou wert of high rank in thine own country. I know, too well, the code of honor there! I have seen too much of your Wilmots and your Goringas, not to be acquainted with their principles. On my arrival at Lausanne, I soon ascertained from my poor, poor, artless child, how her affections had been given—not cautiously and with calculation as in your chill country—but unreservedly—utterly and forever! I heard of your nightly meetings; of your long protracted intimacy; but never one word of marriage! What, indeed, would a poor village girl have done in your lordly halls in haughty England? Well! that poor village girl is all that remains to me on earth to love, to care for, to protect. Since her father died, she has been to me as my own child—my comfort, hope, and pride. In an evil hour, I left Switzerland to toil for her, and not vainly, in foreign lands. Returning with wealth that might have made her a bride for princes, I found her, as I thought, the pastime of a masquerading outlaw. Of him there was but one question to be asked, and his answer involved life and honor. Hadst thou fallen by my hand on the spot that gave thee refuge, or had my death consummated thy triumph, my child's fair name would have been tarnished. Here, if either of us perish, it

will only be talked of as an accident. Do you understand me now?"

"So well," I replied, "that I acquit you of all blame. Let us, then, as true comrades, forget all else for the present, except how we can best stand by and assist each other. If I fail you, believe me to be the villain that you thought me yesterday."

For the first time since our acquaintance, Arnold's features assumed a kindly—almost a gentle expression.

"I would that I had known thee better and sooner," he said, as with a sorrowing but a manful gaze he examined our forlorn position. He shook hands with me in silence; wrote some lines on a leaf of his tablet and placed it carefully in my hunting frock. Then, he said, solemnly:

"There is yet one chance, but it is a fearful one. Thou seest this long steep slope of snow? It must rest on a ledge of rock, or of ice, firm enough to bear some weight. It swells out over the chasm that divides us from the living world; and beyond its edge there seems good footing on the opposite cliff, not a dozen feet apart. Now, if you have nerve and activity enough, you may slide along this bank of snow, and spring for your life when it ceases to support you. There is no other hope."

"And you?"

"Will follow, or precede you, as you please; you have a right to choose."

"Which do you recommend me?"

"To be last; for then, if I fail, you may try some other more desperate-seeming but happier chance."

I waited for no more: breathing one earnest prayer, I committed myself forthwith to the snowy steep. I shot down it with a rapidity that almost took away my sight, but as I felt the cold air blow up from the abyss beneath, I made one desperate spring; the gulf yawned blackly below me for one moment, the next I was landed on firm rock beyond; trembling, I confess it, in every fiber of my frame.

As soon as I could steady myself, I looked up. There—some hundred feet above me—was Arnold, separated by that awful chasm from the 'living world,' as he had said a few minutes before. He was now kneeling on the snow; his head was bowed very low, and his hands were clasped upon his breast. The vultures were still flapping their dark wings impatiently, as they wheeled in still narrowing circles over that solitary man.

At length he rose, and with a thoughtful but brave air, once more looked round upon his magnificent mountains and his distant home. Then, girding his belt firmly round him, he descended on the shelving snow. It was already deeply marked where I had passed, and he endeavored to keep himself in the same track; as he launched himself on the declivity I turned away my eyes; I could not bear to watch the fearful experiment. I listened to the rushing sound, however, and held my breath to hear his foot fall on the snow beside me. I heard it not; but instead of it, a sort of groan, and nothing more. When I looked up at last, I saw nothing but the mountains and the sky, the dark abyss, and the vultures hoarsely screaming, as if baffled of their prey!

I have witnessed many terrible scenes in my time, but never one that thrilled me with such

horror as this brave Switzer's fate. I did not dare to dwell upon it then, however, for I had still a most perilous path to tread, without a guide or any experience to direct me. Evening, too, was stealing upward from the valleys, and to pass the night among those glaciers was certain death. I started at once upon my lonely way; sustained—nay, winged—by desperation, I bounded along where the chamois might have feared to tread. I climbed steep precipices of uncertain snow, and leaped wide fissures in the ice that would have defied my best efforts at another time. And still I pressed forward, acquiring fresh confidence, and a stronger momentum of mind as well as body, at every conquered danger.

At length I stood upon the grass, the soft familiar grass, that seemed to me like the blessed shore to the half-drowned sailor. I then descended more leisurely, and, almost in an exhausted state, I reached the good pastor's house at midnight.

There I found a kind welcome, and sincere sympathy for my comrade's dreadful fate. The old priest seemed grieved, but not shocked to hear it. Such dismal accidents were too common amongst his mountains to excite surprise. When I explained to him the spot where I had lost my companion, and inquired whether we might not be able to recover his body, he replied:

"In the cottage adjoining mine, lives a widow with three brave sons. Her husband's corpse has lain unburied for sixteen years in the very chasm that you speak of. He was one of the few who ever reached the glacier that surmounts it, and he was lost on his return. No human eye will ever see him more." So saying, the venerable priest led me to a chamber, in which was a bed of fir tops, and there, notwithstanding all my trouble, I slept a dreamless sleep.

The next morning, I found that the Puritan had a slight access of fever, which was considered a favorable sign, but of course increased the necessity for quiet. I could not rest. Seizing my carbine, I once more set out toward the fatal glacier, and attempted to explore its mysteries. In vain. Never, until the "world shall melt with fervent heat," may the bodies of those who rest in the crypts of that icy wilderness be revealed!

For some days longer I remained in the house of the good pastor of the mountain. I did not wish to leave it until I had some further conversation with the Puritan, but I was enjoined for the present not to disturb him. Day by day, I proceeded to my hopeless search for Arnold's remains, and returned each night to the hospitable *presbytere*.

At length, Hezekiah appeared restored to comparative health, and expressed to me a wish that he might be removed from being a burthen on the poor priest. I invited him to my humble cottage; but I did not describe it as humble, fearing lest he should construe the expression into a reproach. It was all the home that he had left to me. After some consideration, he replied:

"Yea, I will even go with thee. My carnal pride revolts so much against thy hospitality, that it must be my duty to accept it. Let us go."

We departed accordingly. The generous priest would accept of no return for all his care, not even of my gratitude, to which he said he had no

claim. His poor little chapel, however, wanted some repairs, and I was still able to afford the few gold pieces that would render it comfortable for the good man and his humble flock. Even this trifling matter, however, I was obliged to arrange with one of the village elders, who, doubtless, has faithfully discharged his trust.

CHAPTER LIV.

I come.

If thou and nature can so gently part,
The stroke of death is a lover's pinch
Which hurts and is desired. Dost thou lie still?
If thus thou vanishest, thou tell'st the world,
It is not worth leave-taking.

SHAKESPEARE.

It was on the second day from our departure that Hezekiah and I found ourselves on the Lake, moving swiftly toward my exile home. I had foreborne to press my companion upon the subject ever uppermost in my thoughts. He was now my guest, and far from having recovered his strength. Indeed, though his external injuries were almost repaired, he looked as ghastly, and appeared to be as weak as ever.

My thoughts were diverted from him by our approach to the shore of Lausanne. I looked forward nervously to meet poor Marguerite, who, I felt certain, would be watching on the shore. As I revolved in my mind how I should best reveal to her the fearful fate of Arnold, I bethought myself of the paper he had committed to me just before his death. I searched eagerly, and at length I found it. In a leaf of his tablet he had written the following words:

"I have been the occasion of bringing this brave Englishman into deadly peril: I write this, in case I should not survive it, to recommend him to the care of every true Swiss. My will may be found in my strong box at Ouchy.

(Signed) ARNOLD BERTHIER."

He had not mentioned his niece; perhaps he shrank from doing so, as I was to be his messenger. But I learned afterward that his will contained the tenderest messages, the wisest counsels, the most anxious directions for her whom he loved as his own child. It appeared also that he had acquired considerable wealth in the course of his industrious career, and that he had bequeathed it all to her.

The more I thought of his love for her, the more anxiously I strained my eyes to discover on the shore the graceful form that so lately was daily presented to my eyes. But, as the boat drew near, I saw she was not there. Nor did I land at the usual place, but coasting on for half a mile, I carried the Puritan ashore close to my own cottage. In another hour, a fire was blazing on the hearth, and my guest was reposing in my bed, surrounded by such homely comforts as my means afforded. He cast his keen glances over my simple apartment with an air of great interest. He had scarcely spoken during our voyage, but now, before he settled himself to rest, he said to me:

"I thank thee for thy care. I shall not long be a burthen to thee, or to the earth which I have so long unprofitably encumbered. To-morrow I will tell thee more."

So saying, he sank into a troubled sleep, as

evening approached, and I hastened anxiously to the well-known walk by the water-side, where I always expected to meet with Marguerite.

Autumn was already come; and instead of the warm, glowing evenings, when the daylight appeared only to be sleeping, it now seemed dead. Night approached blackly, and a cold, dreary wind crept along the gloomy surface of the lake. Funereal silence pervaded earth and sky, except where the weary waves were sobbing against the leaf-strewn shore.

A feeling of instinctive dread came over me, as I paced to and fro upon the lonely path: I almost expected to see the spirit of her who was wont to meet me there: but nothing, except the dark stems of the pine-trees, met my view. At length I could bear the suspense no longer. I proceeded to the little village, to the well-known inn. No sound of life was there, and the door was closed.

I obtained admittance, and found myself in the little parlor, where I had first seen Marguerite in all her pride of life and winning beauty, seated by her happy mother's side. That mother was there now, worn and wasted with watching and weeping: her child was stretched upon a bed of sickness, unconscious of all joy or sorrow.

The poor widow welcomed me with affectionate earnestness; she still recognized me as the preserver of her daughter's life; perhaps she thought I was the possessor of her daughter's love. At all events, she welcomed me as frankly and more kindly than ever.

"Her child had fallen ill upon the very evening of her uncle's departure, some ten days ago. She had caught cold, she knew not how." But, too well did I know. "She had kept her bed, and grew daily worse; and now the doctor said there was but little hope for her!—But I must see her angel girl, and who could tell that she might not remember me, and that it might not do her good?"

I did not hesitate to accept the poor mother's offer to visit her dying child. Her first announcement had stricken me with such anguish, that all further trial seemed of no account. I longed to look upon that gentle, lovely face once more: however changed, I should still read there the pity and the love that shone over me when all else was dark.

I entered the little chamber where she lay; paler was her beautiful face than the white linen that she pressed; no marble statue could seem more still, and fair, and lifeless, save for the rich wavy hair that streamed wildly round her pure, calm brow, and down upon her pillow. Her eyes were closed, but their dark orbs shadowed the transparent lids that veiled them; her delicate, thin hands were crossed upon her breast. I thought she was dead, as I involuntarily knelt beside her.

With the most gentle force I took one of her cold hands in mine, and pressed it to my lips, softly murmuring her name. The tremors of life seemed to steal through her frame; she slowly opened her eyes, and once more looked upon me. A smile of ineffable beauty passed over her pale lips, and she uttered faintly these few words:

"My dream was true; I knew thou wouldst come for me from thy grave among the mountains.—I am ready.—Let us go!"

She strove to turn toward me with these last words, and in that effort died.

* * * * *

Three days afterward, I attended her funeral. Poor Marguerite! she lay upon her little bed, as before; not a whit more pale or less beautiful. They had dressed her, as for a festival, in virgin white, and a wreath of living flowers encircled her dead brow. She seemed to me appareled exactly as when first I saw her, in the pride and prime of life!

In an outer room, also dimly lighted by torches of pine-wood, sat the childless widow, surrounded by weeping friends, whose sympathy did not seem importunate to her simple sorrow. And when the child was carried out, crossing her own threshold for the last time, those friends gathered round the mother, to hide that last departure from her sight. Then we moved onward into the open sunlight; and onward, toward the grave. As we passed each house, its inmates joined the sad procession, with heads uncovered and glistening eyes: there was not one mere formal mourner there. At length we reached the last, best resting-place of weary humanity; the beautiful form of our loved one was lowered gently into its dark bed, and the earth closed over all that was mortal of young Marguerite.

* * * * *

"Sweet flower! with flowers I strew thy bridal bed;
Sweet tomb, that in thy circuit doth contain
The perfect model of eternity;
Fair Marguerite, that with angels dost remain,
Accept this latest favor at my hands;
That living honored thee, and being dead,
With funeral praises do adorn thy tomb!"

CHAPTER LV.

No resting could he finde at all,
No ease, nor heart's content;
No house, no home, no biding place:
But wandering forth he went
From town to towne in foreign landes.
With grieved conscience still,
Repenting for the heinous guilt
Of his forepassed ill.

THE WANDERING JEW (ANCIENT BALLAD).

In the painful sense of vacuity that followed, I turned with feverish interest toward the Puritan, in order to distract my thoughts. For the last few days I had ministered to his wants in silence, with which he seemed well satisfied. I now told him that I had been attending the funeral of a dear friend, but for the future that I could devote more time to my duties as his host.

"They will not long be needed," he replied solemnly; "my pilgrimage is nearly accomplished; my most wretched existence is drawing near its close. Wonderful has been the guiding that led me to thy roof for my last shelter—that appointed thy hand to close my weary eyes—thine ears to receive my last and only confession. Yes—Reginald Hastings, thou hast heaped coals of fire on my head, and they have melted my stubborn heart. I always, even when I hated thee, respected thy bravery, and would have loved, whilst I pitied, the gentleness of thy heart. For my hate—it has never harmed thee as it has harmed me. No—though it has left thee houseless, landless, and alone in a land of exile. Still thou hast acted according to thy light, dimly as it shone for thee. In poverty and despair, thou didst not turn to mercenary blood-

shed for subsistence, nor to debauchery for a coward's comfort. I find thee here alone, wrestling manfully with thy fate, and dignifying privation with contentment, and energetic fortitude. Thy hand is hardened by honest work, and thy brow is darkened by the sweat of noble labor. Yea, thou hast wrestled bravely with the angel of thy fate, and won from Him his blessing. For me, who hated thee, and triumphed over thee, I have no such retrospect, as thou shalt learn. Why should I not tell thee all? What have I to seek shelter in but humiliation and self-abasement, and what sterner penance can I perform than to make what the Papists call my shrift, to thee?

"I was born like thee,—a Cavalier and a high Churchman,—that is, as one who saw naught in politics but a King; and naught in religion but its priests. I was brought up in the half-heathenish sort of education that becomes such principles. When Nature made me ready for the world, I was fit for nothing but to fight my way through it, like a wild beast that preys on blood. I became a soldier therefore; I was fearless and subtle, and I obtained notice. I went to France with the Duke of Buckingham;—here the Puritan seemed as if he suffered pain which kept him silent for a few minutes. He then resumed, in a sterner voice: "I became his favorite—his minion rather,—for he dared to trample on me when I would not humble myself to all his caprices. We quarreled; he sent me on a 'forlorn' against Rochelle, in hopes to quiet me. Most of my party were slain; I was taken prisoner, my junior officer escaped and was promoted.

Meanwhile, I lay, wounded and forgotten, in the hospital of a French prison. I will not attempt to tell thee what visions then presented themselves to me; what realities I beheld that transcended all imagination. Hour after hour, astounding truths flashed new light upon my long-blinded and darkened soul. It awoke to a consciousness of its pollution; it endeavored to purify itself, and conceived the great ambition of self-regeneration. From that time I was a changed man; new thoughts rushed in upon my mind, until my brain reeled beneath their pressure. As they assumed form, they gradually shaped themselves into a destiny. I felt that I had a great mission given to me to fulfill. By fasting and prayer, I prepared for a just trial of my faith: I resolved to escape from prison in the open day; if I failed, I should perish, and there was an end of all; if I succeeded, I should take it for a sign.

"I did succeed, miraculously; I was led thence to Geneva, where I refreshed my thirst after divine learning, at the fountains opened by Calvin and his great disciples. I felt called to England, and reached that enslaved island, I scarcely know how. My tyrant, Buckingham, was then in full power; supreme over the country and the country's King. I felt called upon to work a great deliverance for Israel; but first I resolved to seek a sign; for I sometimes held fearful doubts that the old man was not dead within me, but survived—lurking and disguised—in my regenerated soul.

"I presented myself to Buckingham, and I made claim upon him for my sufferings in his cause. Not that I cared for aught that was in the all-powerful minion's ability to bestow; but I thought that if he gave patient ear unto me, or

showed human feeling—that then, it might be—he was not ordained to die by my hand. But he spurned me; he vilified, he blasphemed me, and—he died. Yes, I—John Felton—slew him with this right arm, and felt that I had done a righteous service.”

The assassin became silent, and his countenance assumed an expression, such as it might have worn when the knife was weltering in the rich veins of Buckingham. Conflicting passions were raging in his memory, as if but just awakened; his teeth were set; his eyes rolled wildly, and the very hair upon his head was stirred, and seemed to creep; whilst his emotion gave him momentary strength, and he sat upright on his pallet—a fearful sight!

The village surgeon had left some soothing medicine, which I now offered to the unhappy man. He dashed it from him, exclaiming fiercely:

“Accursed be all opiates and the repose that they can give. Accursed be all the soothing delusions that wrap the soul or body in lethargic rest, when they have the great work of eternity to perform. I once thought otherwise,—I once thought that when my spirit was frozen by despair, it was a calm from pleased Heaven that brooded over it. When I smote that unhappy man, I felt even so! I walked contentedly in front of the tumultuous crowd that gathered round him. I felt that they could not harm me—and they did not. In vain was the bitter anger and vengeance of England’s King; in vain was torture threatened; I told my Lord of Dorset, who thought that steel and fire could wring secrets out of a soul like mine! I told him that he was the only man I should accuse—and he threatened it no more.

“I was condemned to die by England’s Judges, but I had been self-condemned before—by my own heart. I offered the right hand that had committed the dark deed, as a free-will offering, but the stern Justice, that stood by English law, forbade it. My life, and nothing but my life, would formal justice have; and she had it not. The people were with me; my guards were with me; the very executioner and the wretches who were to share my fate—all hated Buckingham. The felon about to close his eyes on England by England’s laws, still hated the minion Buckingham.

“I know not how they managed it; nor care. Some one of my brother malefactors was hanged twice over, or some one else was hanged, I cared not. I knew that I was not fated then to die, because I longed for death as a weary child for sleep. I was saved by some juggle and set free. I loathed my crime then;—ah! horribly. I had resolved to slay the man Buckingham, but I had not thought of his immortal soul; now tortured among demons for ages everlasting. Once more I sought a sign to justify myself: I smote my right hand with a sword, but it was severed. I did not reck the loss of limb, the pain, the enduring mark of shame: I felt only the destruction of my assurance that I had been appointed to slay that man.

“Humbled as I was, I sought her—with whom alone the hapless, the doomed, the despairing are sure to find refuge, if not sympathy—my mother. She was aged and forlorn, and in poverty; but she received me, and she comforted me. Blessed be the few months that I passed un-

der her humble roof! they were the peaceablest of my whole life. I took orders; none knew that I bore a name of ignominy: I entered into your church and I, the convicted felon, had a pulpit to preach from, and a house to shelter my mother. I preached too boldly. I was driven from my pulpit, banished from my home. I could not remain a pensioner on my parishioners. I wandered away with my poor mother in mid-winter. She died. I rebelled against the church. I made myself friends among the friendless; I became the favorite orator of the London people; and yet, I never spoke to them one word I did not feel.

“The leaders of the great popular movement then courted me; I was admitted to their councils; I soon obtained more weight there than was convenient to them. I was sent away to the north under a plausible pretext; I remained for some months an inmate of—”

The Puritan’s voice had for some time been failing—had failed from time to time, but had been recovered and sustained thus far. Now his lips moved, but no sound proceeded from them, and yet he knew it not. It was awful to see the various emotions of his supposed confession pass over his changing countenance, and yet to hear nothing!

The shades of night gathered over us; profound silence wrapped all around, and the fitful gleaming of the fire alone threw its light upon us—the imaginary speaker, and the eager watcher for a word that might throw light upon his future life. Hitherto, with a clear, articulate voice, had the Puritan spoken of himself; now that he was about to speak of Zillah, his voice failed him, faltered, and was gone.

At length he seemed roused to a consciousness of his inability to speak. He groped under his pillow, as one blind, but he was unable to do more; his attenuated hand rested where he had placed it; and so, after his stormy and passioned life, that gifted and crime-stained man passed away.

Morning came at length, brightly and hopelessly shining over that house of death, and darting light and life into everything save the pallid body that once had energy and daring enough to set itself against the old power of the English throne. I rose from feverish dreams to gaze upon the wasted corpse. I remembered his last gesture, and sought beneath his pillow for what he had failed to tell. I found there a letter directed to me; it was from Zillah, and had been opened; it was dated long ago, and ran thus:

“FOR THE LORD HASTINGS.

“Some time since, I wrote to you to say that I had been visited by one whom you remember well. He had almost persuaded me that I ought to surrender the administration of my poor father’s property to the Parliament, for the present. Indeed, I should have done so, but that he at length proposed to me to return to England—and with him! I at once retired from the *grille*, and was somewhat disturbed to find that the abbess had been a listener to our conversation; and she was an Englishwoman. From that day forth she persecuted me with her attentions, her arguments, and her controversy. I attempted to take refuge with poor Phœbe; but at length I was forbidden to see her; she was under some ‘soul-saving discipline,’ as they expressed it.

"Meanwhile, time passed on, and a year expired since we had entered the nunnery. I was disturbed one morning by more than usual ringing of bells, and sounds of life within the convent walls. I inquired the reason, and was told that a bride of the Church was about being wed. I was invited to the ceremony. I saw a veiled novice kneeling at a gorgeous altar: I heard solemn music, and priests chanting joyfully: the abbess approached the poor victim of the Church, removed her white vail, and cut off the rich, Auburn hair that clustered round her lowly-bended head; then, like an eclipse, a black vail descended on the new-made nun, and all was over. One more triumphant hallelujah pealed through the chapel, and the sister turned to take her place among those who have left the world forever; I then saw my sister!

"Oh! she was so pale and spirit-like in those shroud-like robes, that I scarcely believed, scarcely hoped, that she was alive! She was, alas! dead to me.

"From that moment I was debarred from all access to their new nun. But I was tempted by every conceivable device to follow her example. My obduracy at length moved the anger of the sisterhood, by which I perceived that I could no longer remain in peace among the Ursulines, and I was meditating how or whither I should depart from there, when I was sullenly summoned to the grille once more.

"My summons was accompanied by a request from the abbess that this visitor might be my last, for she felt that scandal might befall her convent, owing to the number of men, heretics, too, who presented themselves for admittance at its gates. I went thither with reluctance. It was, however, with unspeakable joy that I then found our old Chaplain, poor Phoebe's earliest friend. He had been forced by the Puritans to leave our old home. He had wandered away over England, wherever he could find hearers for his doctrine. Thus he had never received the letters that Phoebe wrote to him, in our distress, from London.

"At length he had reached that city, whereto all wanderers, sooner or later, are surely attracted. He had heard of my poor father's death. He had traced us painfully to St. Germain, and now he stood before me, jaded and faint, and in beggar's weeds. When I told him of Phoebe's fate, the faithful old man was well-nigh overcome.

"I have lost her," he exclaimed; "she who was the star of my evening—my only hope on earth—my child, my child!"

"And, so saying, he lifted up his voice and wept. I tried to soothe him. I claimed his assistance—I prayed him to accept me instead of her who was lost to him.

"Finally, I have arranged with him to take me hence to-morrow. And yet I know not where to go. By the murder of the King, a wide gulf seems opened between me and my former friends in hapless England. If in my foolish childhood, I was prepossessed against kingly power, I can still less stoop to that of successful soldiers and bravoës, however sanctified. France is almost as distracted as our own country, and Germany is a wilderness. Switzerland appears to me to be the safest refuge. Amongst her brave and free people I perhaps may find repose.

"I leave these hurried lines with the *concierge*

to be delivered to you. If they are not asked for, I shall think that you have not survived the war. Farewell."

CHAPTER LVI.

And its hame, and its hame, and its hame we fain
would be,
Though the cloud is in the lift, and the wind is on
the lee;
For the sun, through the mirk, looking blithly on
mine 'ee,
Says, I'll shine on ye yet in your ain countree.
OLD BALLAD.

I COULD easily imagine the manner in which the Puritan had become possessed of this letter. I could less understand how he had reconciled himself to its appropriation. But his was a character that made for himself his own laws, and was satisfied to act by them. His naturally great capacity, and prejudices warped by untoward circumstances, formed a mass of contradictions, which nothing but his own vehement and constraining will could force into one channel.

Felton was one of those whom enthusiasm, at the same time, inspired with supernatural power, and made it impracticable for any useful or sustained purpose. His strong passions lent their aid, at once to intensify his energies, and to render them abortive. He was so intent on controlling others, that he neglected his own self-command.

If he had not met with Zillah, he might have risen to almost any influence amongst the men who then ruled the people, whose power was based on influences less powerful, but more steadily maintained than those that he possessed. With the proud consciousness of genius by which genius is always possessed, he was ascetically humble, and self-condemned by convictions of his own great guilt. He only aspired, therefore, to rule through the medium of another, and that other he sought in Zillah. His ardent imagination had invested her with the attributes and destiny of Joan of Arc. Her sublime beauty, her high purity, her singular eloquence, he imagined fitted her for such a mission; and who shall say that she did not lend a temporary ear to such flattery? To be the savior of her distracted country; to unite a divine and apparent duty with that ambition which lurks, however secretly, in the gentlest heart; to obtain a bloodless victory for the principles of faith and freedom; all this seemed not impossible, perhaps, to her youthful and excited fancy.

But all this was over now; her castles in the air had faded, had been resolved into a common cloud, which had been accidentally converted into glory by the sunlight of imagination. All whom she had loved had passed away, even the cause of spotless purity that she had hoped to see triumphant. I saw her, in idea, a lonely exile, like myself; perhaps by this time deprived of even the old chaplain's protection; with all her beauty, isolated among strangers.

I determined as soon as I laid the poor Puritan in his grave to set out in search of her. My home had become insupportable to me; the land, the lake, the very skies seemed to be in mourning for Marguerite, and perpetually to reproach me with my heartlessness.

I sold the little property I possessed; and once more mounted on my black steed, I looked my last upon that lovely scenery, and all its haunted woods, and paths, and GRAVES.

I soon found myself at Geneva, and the old goldsmith, whom I had before employed, had letters for me. One was from Bryan, and to the following effect: it was dated from the well-remembered house in London, where we had so long been guests.

The young cavalier had taken to his new profession with characteristic enthusiasm and energy; he had been proportionably successful—successful beyond his hopes. After two years absence he returned to Venice, where he found our friend the merchant, with his daughter; the mother had died soon after she had reached her native city. Bryan, having won both fame and gold, was received with consideration by the Venetian Seignory: They tendered him a high command, but the merchant had offered him his partnership. The Empire of India would not have tempted him to hesitate, when Fay was in the balance.

He had gratefully accepted the merchant's proposal, and was now in London on matters of business-connected with his new vocation. Party persecution had almost ceased, and he had been unmolested. He had seen even Hotspur in the city, and had given him my address.

The other letter was from that redoubtable cavalier, and ran thus:

"My worthy Cousin,

"They tell me you are turned Swiss, and have made your sword into a reaping-hook. Well for you, to have anything to reap besides laurels, which are such a barren crop. I have turned into something stranger still—a man of business! Yes! I have been up in the North, trying to disinherit myself, and, thank Heaven, I have succeeded. I got a 'pass' into Lincolnshire; and by using half as much ingenuity to be honest as that d——d Hezekiah did to serve his master the devil, I have succeeded. I have proved that humbugging deed to be a forgery—and so you're welcome, my Lord, to your own home whenever you please to return and can get possession of it.

"But, by the way, the scoundrels of the Close Committee have confiscated your property, and the old Manor itself is so bedeviled by the Roundheads, that nothing but a few old Puritan jackdaws can find comfort there at present. However, the royal standard will be raised once more in a few days, and all will then be right.

'The King shall have his own again,
And a fig for the Close Committee.'

"P. S. On the strength of that fig, I screwed money enough of your farmers to pay myself for the money I sent you—which in good sooth I wanted sorely. I tell you no more news, for this letter may never reach you—moreover I expect daily to see you in the field, scampering along upon old Satan, with a scarf across your cuirass, and a cheer for King Charles as your cry.

"Yours affectionately,

"H. H."

This letter was of an old date. Since it was written, the fatal fight of Worcester had ruined the last hope of the Royal cause. Our King, was like myself, an exile.

I had let fall Bryan's letter, as I was reading that from Hotspur; they had both been addressed to "Master Neville," by which name alone I was known to the old goldsmith. He picked up the letter I had dropped, and as he handed it to me he hesitated, and at last said timidly:—

"You will pardon me, I hope, for having accidentally seen the name by which your correspondent addresses you. I have had inquiries made frequently for Lord Hastings, which I was unable to answer. Dare I do so now?"

I answered eagerly in the affirmative, buoyed up with a rising hope.

"It was only an old man," the goldsmith resumed: "a very old and reverend-looking man, who was making inquiries in that name. I have done some business for him, and but yesterday furnished him with certain moneys for his travel. He has been living some time at Versoix, he is now on his road to Italy."

I waited for no more. I scarcely stopped to ask which road, and I found that I must have passed the chaplain (for I doubted not that it was he), upon the road. I was soon mounted, and retracing my steps far more rapidly than I had before traveled. At Morges, I heard that an old man and two females,—closely veiled, had just left the town. In a few minutes afterward I was by Zillah's side.

* * * *

All coldness, all distance, all reserve had passed away. We were alone in the wide world but for each other; and yet the world seemed no longer lonely.

We proceeded into Italy. We were obliged to pass through Lausanne; but we traversed it quickly, and my wife, Zillah, did not even ask the reason why. To this day, she only knows that I there labored for long years, and that there the Puritan found a grave. Poor Marguerite's story will never be known as long as I am living. Let woman's love be ever sacred!

* * * *

At Genoa, superb Genoa, we found repose. There, by the glorious waters of the Mediterranean, beneath the joyous sun of Italy, we passed some happy years. But still, deep longings after our own distant country would often mingle with the sense of enjoyment. Often, when gazing pensively upon the sea, some English ship, or it might be, only some English-looking cloud, would cause our eyes to meet, and seek and find a sympathy; each of us could read in the other's thoughts the picture of a sea-beaten shore, bordered by green hills, with oak and hawthorn woodlands reaching upward to the old Manor.

But the chaplain never seemed infected with this home-sickness. He felt so near his final home, that he thought little of any resting-place upon the road; and never was mortal pilgrim more gently borne toward his goal. His last hours, too, were watched over by Zillah as by a daughter, and his spirit rejoiced in her return to the services of his beloved Church. For my wife now numbered the vague doctrines of the Puritans among the disappointing aspirations of her younger days. She had hoped to find in it a reformation of the Reformation—so pure an essence of her ancient faith, that controversy itself might find no more material for its strife. Her hope had failed—she had seen many of her preachers become wild, and,—in some instances, profane sectarians; she had seen many of her

patriots degenerate into "self-seekers," demagogues and regicides. Her zealous mind experienced a reaction proportioned to her overstrained enthusiasm; she now feared Puritanism even more than Papistry, and would have taken refuge from democracy in despotism itself.

Nor was she singular in thus rushing to extremes. The mind of the multitude in England was similarly changing; and from time to time, vague rumors of returning loyalty reached even to our exile. Booth's insurrection had nearly recalled me to my native country, but the sinking health of the old chaplain, and reluctance to leave my wife alone among strangers, delayed my departure until too late.

We were expecting anxiously, however, to hear the result of an undertaking that, if successful, was to restore us to our homes. We were sitting on the sea-shore, watching a ship from the westward, which might, we thought, be the bearer of momentous intelligence. It was evening, and our aged friend made an effort to accompany us, in order to enjoy the glories of a southern sunset. We pillowed him against a grassy bank and endeavored to inspire him with the interest we felt in the approaching vessel,—but his thoughts were elsewhere. He smiled unconsciously at our hopes, and he smiled still more at our fears. The ship cast anchor, and her boat approached the shore: I hastened to meet the mariners, and the first man who leaped ashore was Bryan.

He had been induced to join Sir George Booth, had been defeated, and had gladly taken refuge in a ship bound for Genoa, where he knew that I sojourned. His wife was on board the vessel he had just left; and, by his account, Fay was more beautiful than ever.

We hastened with these tidings to where Zillah sat, with the old chaplain half resting on her arm; she held her finger to her lip, to enjoin caution, as her patient was asleep; we approached softly; he was indeed sleeping, but it was the sleep of death; yet he still seemed to smile.

CHAPTER LVII.

And all within, the riven walls were hung,
With ragged monuments of times forepast,
All which the sad effects of discord sang:
There were rent curtains, broken comforts' plast,
Altars defiled, and holy things defast,
Disbruised spears, and shields ytorne in twaine,
Of all which ruines there some reliicks did remaine.
SPENSER.

ENGLAND is still ringing with the sounds of joy that welcomed back her Charles to his throne. With him came many an exile in his father's cause; but none knelt more gratefully than I did, at my own threshold, ruined though I was, as I offered up thanksgiving for my own and my sovereign's restoration.

But I was soon reminded that I was a trespasser there; on the soil, and under the roof tree that my ancestors had possessed for ages. The Roundheads had confiscated our estates, and given them to a Quaker named Malacme Meekly, in consideration of large sums of money advanced by him to carry on the war. This individual had wrung what rents he could from the land; but he had allowed the house to fall to ruin; indeed, he had never visited it until the King's return to London

induced him to seek for retirement in these remote parts. This individual now presented himself before me, and with a resigned air demanded what I wanted?

"Strong men," he added, "and fierce dogs would not be wanted to compel my retreat, if it was not a voluntary and hasty one."

He delivered himself thus, very gently, and with his small eyes cast down; but when I announced my name, he cast on me a keen, sudden, and alarmed glance that inquired whether I was come to dispossess him. I felt too grateful for my safe return, and was too much moved by the associations of all around me, to feel hostile toward my usurping adversary. I told him that I was aware he had purchased his present property; that I held it far more dear than he could do, and that I would gladly repurchase it at any price, within my reach, that he chose to set upon the old house and property. I was enabled to make this offer by the wealth that had accumulated in Zillah's name during our long exile; not only her father's lands, but his large pecuniary investments had been honestly and judiciously cared for by her puritanical kinsfolk.

Master Meekly only read in my offer an admission of his secure right to enjoy my property, and his heart was glad. In the same resigned manner that he had threatened to let loose his dogs upon a stranger, he now contemptuously repelled my offer, and warned me never to present myself again upon his lands: he informed me also, in the gentlest manner, that if any one belonging to me was ever seen within his bounds, such persons should be prosecuted with the utmost rigor of the law. I did not trust myself to answer the bland ruffian. I walked away pensively, though irritated; and before I reached the castle, (or Sax-onbury Hall, as it is now called, resuming its ancient name,) I had resolved to visit London, and there endeavor to recover what was to me the hallowed home of my fathers.

I found Zillah anxiously occupied in repairing poor Phoebe's ruined garden: it was the first task that she had set herself on her arrival. She had seen her sister as we returned through Paris; and this garden seemed to be the poor Nun's only point of interest. When I told Zillah of my intentions to plead my cause before the King, she shook her head, but did not attempt to oppose my journey. She did not share my hopes of its success.

I only waited to see my old friends once more, and to thank the few who remained of those who fought for my escape. I seemed to behold a new generation, when my former tenants presented themselves. Many were altogether strangers to me; I had seen them, perhaps, when they were curly-headed children playing on the village green; but they were now stalwart, bearded men; their fathers had grown wondrously aged, I fancied, for so short a time—anxious as it was. The former elders had quite passed away; some few, they said, had died of broken hearts, when the King was slain. The name of Blount was scarcely then remembered; though now it is carved upon a marble monument, raised by the sea-side, in memory of as faithful a service as ever was performed. Rosine had watched over her husband's father till his death, and had then wandered away, none knew whither. I never could discover her.

I shall not weary the reader with any account

of my journey to London. I fear he must be already well nigh weary of my wanderings. Suffice it to say, that London presented such a change in its aspect, its manners, and its temper, as might appear incredible, on considering the vast matter there was to change. Whitehall was already restored to its former glories. The Banqueting Hall had lately resumed its convivial functions, so awfully interrupted by the late King's death. I now found myself awaiting his successor's audience, as I stood in the window that had opened on the scaffold.

Familiar as I had been with the martial court at Oxford, I was astonished to observe the changes that had taken place in it. With reverence be it spoken, I could almost have fancied myself at Versailles. The only courtiers who seemed at home here, were jabbering French, and lisping foreign oaths, through beards trimmed in Parisian fashion. Instead of casting off the slough of foreign dress and manner, these coxcombs seemed to adhere to both as a test of quality: the corruption, without the grace, of Louis's Court still clung to them. As different in appearance as men of rival nations, were the old Cavaliers, who crowded to an audience of their restored King. A stern and martial look was worn by many amongst whom I recognized former friends; but the greater number exhibited an air of gay and reckless levity that contrasted, not agreeably, with gray hairs. I made this observation to the stout old Earl of Craven, who replied—

"Yet those are the fellows, depend upon it, who will get anything from our new sovereign. A ribald jest, or a quaint conceit, will prevail more than all our scars and forgotten services. You, I presume, are come to seek for compensation; or perhaps restoration of your paternal land. Let me tell you, reluctantly, you have no chance. Clarendon and his Machiavellian brother statesmen have determined not to disturb any 'vested interests,' I think they call them; and as for compensation, all the money that the exhausted Treasury can grasp, is scarcely sufficient to buy jewels and yellow starch for Lucy Waters and her kind."

This was discouraging intelligence, but I soon made my way to the Chancellor himself, who confirmed it.

"Any property," said he, "that has been confiscated may perhaps be restored; but the amnesty exempts all those who have meantime enjoyed it, from being obliged to make retribution, and property that has been legally bought and paid for must so remain."

I was silenced. I determined, however, to press for an audience of the King from a sort of sentiment. I had long time to wait, and my suspense was the more disagreeable from the remarks made upon me by the court wits. I was, of course, set down as a suitor for some favor; every one in that crowded hall, except the professional courtiers, was a suitor, men of all classes, claims, and characters. Will Davenant wanted a play-house, because he had corrupted the garrison of York by his debaucheries and his wit; Gauden wanted a bishopric, because he had pirated the fame of Icon Basilicon: dissolute soldiery wanted promotion; ruined gentlemen wanted compensation; all the poets wanted to be laureates, and all the pamphleteers to become secretaries of state. In short, everybody wanted everything. Most of those who were disap-

pointed consoled themselves with their strength of claim; and not a few repeated these familiar lines out of Hudibras, by way of reprisals:—

But this good king it seems was told,
By some who were with him too bold;
"If you want to gain your ends,
Caress your foes and trust your friends."

The strangest application of all, perhaps, was made by a Dominican friar, who came to beg for alms toward a church in Spain, wherein the soul of the late King had been prayed for. I had been observing the motley crowd for some time, watching with interest for the old familiar names that were applied to new persons—Rochester, Southampton, and Buckingham, for instance. The latter might, perhaps, be taken as the type of the second Charles's court, as Digby was of the courtiers of his father. Buckingham was brilliant, fascinating, witty, gracious; but volatile, superficial, madly extravagant, and heartless. He had sufficient tact, however, to be very useful to his master; he always endeavored to conciliate the old Cavaliers, and treated his meaner brother courtiers with contempt. I had watched him moving through the room, for some time, with interest; at length he approached a group of silken parasites, who were playing cribbage, and occasionally devoting their souls languidly to perdition upon some point of the game.

"D—your diminutive oaths!" exclaimed Buckingham. "If you must swear, swear handsomely; swear by the loud thundering, and eternal immortal Ju—"

"Swear not at all!" interrupted a solemn voice, which appeared to be recognized, but not by many; for the garb of the speaker was that of a Dominican friar, and his voice was the voice of Goring, Earl of Norwich! I might multiply these strange incidents innumera-ly, in speaking of this extraordinary court, but my conscience warns me not to trespass further on the reader's patience.

At length I obtained admission into the presence. The King accosted me with an air of such frank and fascinating courtesy that I immediately forgot all my vexation at delay. He received me without the least formality, led me into a window recess, and inquired about my affairs; alluded to my father's character and services in a manner that gratified and surprised me; assured me that if what I desired could be done for any man in England it should be done for me, and dismissed me with the kind expressions of regret, that he was unable to grant my prayers at once. I took my leave, and he never thought of my affairs again; and yet my gracious monarch is no hypocrite. Nay, more, I am almost as much obliged by his attention to my cause as if he had granted it, or been able to do so. How little do people in power know their power!

As I was leaving the presence, I met my cousin Hotspur pressing in. He turned back with me, however, and declared, with delight, that now he had found me, he would not leave me for any King in Europe. He had sought for me in all directions, and hitherto in vain. He had just learned that I was at court, and the object of my being there.

"Save yourself that trouble," he continued: "if these fellows had assisted you, you would have no comfort in your acquisition; what be-

tween these insatiable expectations of remuneration, and the obligations they would haunt you with the sense of. I have settled all this affair for you by my own right hand and giddy head. Your Quaker's possession of Beaumanoir is not worth a rush; he has almost as little right to it, as I had. He purchased the property as confiscated from *me*; I have proofs that I had no right to it, and his title falls to the ground. The Com-

mittee-fellows knew they were in a scrape, and they sold him your broad lands for a mere trifle; you can pay him his whole price, if you are generously minded, out of a couple of years' rent. There, say no more about it, my dear coz; and that's all I beg of you, in return for a little trouble that I have had in the business. Now the audience is nearly ended, and I must make a dash for it. Farewell!"

THE END.

